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JANUARY 4-10, 2012 EASTBAYEXPRESS.COM

COACH COLLINS

Richmond High's Ken Carter was immortalized in a movie, but his replacement, Rob Collins, is back and the Oilers believe he's the real deal. By Paul Gackle

Poverty Stricken 13
A new report shows that Oakland's refugees from Burma are stuck in extreme poverty.

Long Live Bette's 26
The popular West Berkeley diner approaches its thirtieth year with grace.

Churches Find Salvation 35
Frontman Caleb Nichols wants to sanctify teen angst.

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On the Cover *Rob Collins and the Richmond Oilers. Photograph by Stephen Loewinsohn*

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NEWS & OPINION

EAST BAY EXPRESS
NEW YEAR'S EVE

LETTERS

OPD Out of Control

I don't know if federal oversight of OPD will improve things or not, but the department is clearly out of control and has been for a very long time. Drastic changes are in order.

John Seal, Oakland

Criminals with Badges

I am a lifelong resident of Oakland. I have never broken the law or acted in such a way that can be deemed as criminal, yet I have never felt protected or served when the OPD is near — in fact, I see the police as criminals with badges.

Reform now, and get rid of the culture that breeds groups like the Riders.

Charlotte M. Banks, Oakland

Not Much Has Changed at Monterey

I've been shopping at Monterey Market for several years. I see zero evidence so far to back up the claims of the California Hopkins Affiliation of Residents and Merchants (CHARM). As far as I can tell, there have been only very, very minor changes to the product lines at Monterey Market. They've always carried some of the same stuff as the smaller stores. When Monterey Market changed ownership there were howls of protest that the market was doomed. As far as I can tell, those predictions haven't yet come to pass.

Brad Johnson, Berkeley

Return to Cooperative Capitalism

I've been shopping at Monterey Market since the 1990s and I'm also a member of the neighborhood group that misses the community-spirited ethos of Bill and Judy Fujimoto.

Under the new owners, the market seems to be moving from a beacon enterprise specializing in quality produce to an all-purpose "lifestyle" shopping site à la Safeway.

True, the market has stocked cheese and tea in the past, but the situation changed when the new owners reportedly started dropping by the small neighboring shops to see what specialty goods were on sale. After asking the small merchants where they sourced these products, the same goods would soon appear on the Monterey Market's shelves — at discounted prices.

As a large retailer, Monterey Market can afford to offer some select goods at lower prices. Both flower sellers in the area reported that they were approached by Monterey reps who asked about their prices and where they obtained their flowers. Both businesses subsequently suffered serious losses when Monterey Market began selling discounted flowers in front of the store. (The new owners deserve credit for halting the sales of flowers following complaints from shoppers who expressed concern about unfair competition.)

The new owners have expanded sales of bottled wines (placing them in competition with Monterey Liquors, whose shelves are now largely empty), have added body care lotions (in competition with another small local store), and reportedly considered adding a butcher (which would compete with nearby Magnani's) and a coffee shop (which would compete with Hopkins Bakery and Cafe Roma directly across the street.)

The six hundred plus shoppers who have signed CHARM's petition would like to see a return to a cooperative, community-based capitalism that supports a variety of merchants, both large and small.

Gar Smith, Berkeley

Not so CHARMing

I'm guessing the new managers invested serious and lengthy thought before taking over the management of the market. What they have done since has shown a respect for both their customers and their employees. It has been fun to watch the changes — first a cleaner store, then new cash registers that make things easier for the checkers and clearer for the customers. They built better bins for the produce and added many new produce items as well as other things their customers requested. Removing bins from the parking lot has made it safer to drive in there. Before the new carts arrived, I asked a couple of box boys about the possibility of new carts, and from their enthusiasm, it seemed like they might be part of the decision making. Actually, despite the crush of new customers, the staff seems happier and more relaxed.

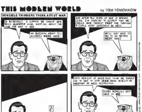
I have shopped at the stores on this corner for more than 35 years. I buy meat at Magnani's. My favorite tea, coffee, and cheese are at the Coffee Market. I buy gift flowers at the flower shop across the street, unless I want something just for me — an inexpensive bouquet from Monterey Market. And I use the Monterey Market's parking lot when I shop in all these small stores.

Got Any Bad Date Stories?

Of course you do, and we want to hear 'em. Send your horror stories to Editor@EastBayExpress.com, subject line "Bad Date," by January 25, and we'll publish our favorites in the Sex Issue, which comes out February 5.

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW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WE'LL JUST HAVE TO TRY TO DO BETTER NEXT TIME!
♪
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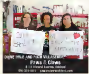
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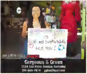
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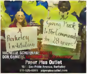
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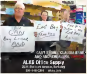
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SATURDAY!
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The CHARM Initiative has had a negative effect on me. According to a staff member at the Coffee Market a few months ago, increased business at Monterey Market has meant more shoppers at their store too. The passion has left a bad taste in my mouth.

Bonnie Cabel, Berkeley

Between a Rock and a Hard Place

Occupy has accomplished what it set out to do — make the country aware of the plight of the unemployed, of pay inequality, of the taxation of the "middle class" to the benefit of the wealthiest, and of the truth that there is still a spirit in the US that people will allow themselves to be pushed only so far (also that folks still enjoy camping out).

Mayor Quan walked the line as best anyone could. Robert Gammon's comment that Quan should have embraced the movement is off base in my opinion. The mayor should take a position on the issues of the movement, perhaps, but to embrace the movement's actions would have been inappropriate. That would have put her in company with Newt Gingrich, who said on *Face the Nation* last week that he would have Supreme Court justices arrested if he became president and he felt that the court's decisions were impinging on his authority as commander-in-chief. (Oh, and also if the court continues to secularize the country.)

The answer, I think, is that there was not one answer that would have mollified everyone. Quan could not make the "right decision." The Occupy movement itself deserves credit for putting her re-election/recall/impeachment at issue. Anti-Vietnam activism (yes, there are parallels) taught me that moderation and working from within the system is often the best course of action.

Richard Iaconff, Pittsfield, Massachusetts

Re: 12/21

Fight Money with Money

It seems to me that Occupy would be best to facilitate some new forms of democracy rather than trying to be just another "same-old" player à la the Tea Party. If government is run by money, use the system against itself by collecting Internet contributions designed to defeat the worst of them — after all, negative politics is easier and will get noticed. Suppose Occupy took up a collection and used it to produce TV ads designed against Mayor Bloomberg's or Quan's re-elections? Other mayors would then think twice about messing with Occupy. Or campaign for financial reform by targeting its opponents. The 99 Percent could become its own "moneyed interest" by focusing many small contributions in one direction.

Keith Doyle, Modesto

Plastic Is the Problem

UC Berkeley, UCLA, and all the UC campuses need to do a disposable plastic audit and return to using real plates and stainless steel cutlery, real glasses and — dare I say it — dishwashers! Ban plastic bottled beverages on campuses and oh, what a difference we will see. Suddenly an enormous reduction in waste and refuse. Refuse disposable and single-use plastics. Join the global movement! PlasticPollution Coalition.org.

Dianna Cohen, Los Angeles

The University's Take

Ellen Cushing's article painted an inaccurate picture of waste management and sustainability efforts on the Cal campus.

The article rightly noted that recycling waste from bins on Sproul Plaza is difficult because the waste is rarely properly sorted. However, the overall recycling rate for the campus is better than the *Express* story might lead one to believe. The amount of solid waste sent to landfills by the campus remained steady in 2010. The diversion rate for campus is 67 percent, although the rate drops to 41 percent when the construction waste is excluded. Overall, solid waste sent to the landfill has dropped 23 percent since 1995 and waste per capita has decreased even more (33 percent.)

New waste bins that were designed with input from our grounds staff are scheduled to be installed on Sproul Plaza in early 2012. The bins, which allow for sorting waste, will be introduced with information about what materials can be recycled.

Along with UC system's Zero Waste pledge, the campus has made its own sustainability pledges of note. A commitment to reduce campus greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2014 (a goal more aggressive than state's) was made in 2007, and this year Chancellor Birgeneau committed to reducing potable water usage by 10 percent by 2020.

Our campus should be proud of the sustainability progress we have made on so many fronts. We also understand that we still have work to do that will include effort and contribution from the entire campus community.

Christine Shaff
Communications Director
UC Berkeley Facilities Services

Ellen Cushing Responds

Ms. Shaff is correct in writing that the university has made some improvements and set some ambitious goals with regard to waste in the last several years. But as the story noted, nearly all surface recycling is sent to the landfill, and the majority of the gains that Shaff mentions have been made by increasing paper recycling in academic and administrative buildings — not by solving the problem of outdoor waste.

Corrections

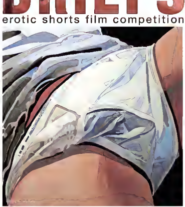
In our December 21 event preview, we misstated the name of the Museum of Art and Digital Entertainment.

And in that issue's Local Licks column, we also misspelled the name of local musician El4D. ▲

Letters Policy

Please provide your full name, address, and daytime phone number, although we will only print your name, city, and affiliation. Send submissions to Letters@EastBayExpress.com or Letters, *East Bay Express*, 620 3rd St., Oakland, CA 94607. Letters are edited for length and clarity.

EAST BAY EXPRESS
BRIEFS
erotic shorts film competition



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RAISING THE BAR

THE AIR JORDAN FRENZY

Corporate messaging is overwhelming.

By Jay Youngdahl

We live in a sea of seductive corporate messages. It is nearly impossible to do a 360 anywhere in the East Bay and not hear or see them. Yet one of the oddest aspects of our time is the willingness to blame those who respond to these messages.

On the Friday before Christmas, Nike released a new retro Air Jordan shoe. These shoes are considered by many to be the coolest piece of attire that a person can wear, bestowing instant credibility from one's peers. Kind of like someone in the One Percent getting a new decked out Mercedes, I guess. In Richmond, more than 1,500 people waited in the cold outside the Hilltop Mall to get the shoes for themselves or their kids for Christmas. A gunshot went off — accidentally, according to police — and the mall was shut down. Large crowds, temporary mall closures, and scattered arrests were seen at other malls in the Bay Area and similar incidents happened throughout the country.

Nike has had a practice of releasing a new Air Jordan model before Christmas for many years and incidents similar to those in Richmond have often occurred. In response to the incidents of this year, and in spite of this history, Nike said, "Consumer safety and security is of paramount importance. We encourage anyone wishing to purchase our product to do so in a respectful and safe manner."

Whatever one thinks about the lust for Air Jordans, or lust for the latest Apple product for that matter, the hypocrisy of the Nike stance should be called out. We have no choice but to swim in this sea of advertising images. Contained within the images is the message that without certain consumer products we are nothing. But those who follow these images and messages in any way other than through the "proper" channel are condemned. What can society expect when corporate logos are on everything, and much of our culture revolves around the latest product or game? Our consumer desires are manufactured and none of us can completely resist. The corporate pushers have made us addicts.

There is an obvious subtext of race and class in the Air Jordan reports, and the condemnation directed at working-class Americans and people of color has been especially strong. Fitting the dominant narrative of an unruly black community in the East Bay, the headline in the *Contra Costa Times* read, "Air Jordan release sparks violence at Richmond, Fairfield malls." When arrests occur in the context of a product popular with African Americans, one is often derided as being stupidly "politically correct" when attributing the situation to anything other than moral failings of those involved. Of course, issues such as this are complicated, but there is a deeper meaning that should be recognized.

Everyone wants to must and be treated with dignity and respect. Recently, a fashion house ran a print ad that read, "I shop ergo I am." In other words, if I don't shop, I don't really count.

The new *Air Jordan*.

Unfortunately, many of us get our sense of being from the products favored by our friends or our culture.

This is not just an issue in our community or country. Last year, riots targeting consumer outlets broke out in certain towns in England. Many young people were arrested and harshly condemned. The judiciary took the extraordinary step of mandating, even before trials, the harshest sentences possible for looters. Yet this same judiciary has ignored the significant financial crimes committed in that country. Sound familiar?

THE GUARDIAN REPORTED THAT YOUNGER LOOTERS TALKED ABOUT THE PRESSURE AND HUNGER FOR THE RIGHT BRAND NAMES, THE RIGHT GOODS.

In covering the disturbances, the *Guardian* newspaper reported on an academic study that included interviews with participants in the consumer riots in England. The interviews were quite revealing. The paper reported that "interviewees — particularly younger looters — talked about the pressure and 'hunger' for the right brand names, the right goods: iPhones, BlackBerrys, laptops, clothing made by Gucci and Ralph Lauren." One fifteen-year-old girl said: "People with the Ralph, the Gucci, the Nike, the trainers, the *Air Forces* [Nike Air Force 1 trainers] it's all the style, just everyone wants it. If you don't have it you're just going to look like an idiot." There was a culture of "wanting stuff," said an eighteen-year-old man. "It's because ... it's like, seen as if you're not wearing like and you're poor, no one don't want to be your friend." And when they got the stuff, they were successful and could be happy. A sixteen-year-old girl said that during the looting, "people were smiling. It was just everyone was smiling. It was literally a festival with no food, no dancing, no music, but a free shopping trip for everyone." This joy is in contrast to the dreary feeling many get from walking by store windows knowing society offers no legal path for them to ever possess what is inside.

The occupiers have challenged all of us to put blame where it is due when we see problems. While we all want a society characterized by respect and safety — Nike claims to want that, too — if corporations such as Nike manufacture our desires, they cannot condemn us when we follow them. To change the actions of consumers who shop legally or illegally, this hypocrisy must be recognized and confronted. ●

JayYoungdahl@EastBayExpress.com

JERRY BROWN'S HYPOCRISY

The governor owes his political turnaround to redevelopment, and yet the state Supreme Court last week affirmed his decision to kill the program

By Robert Gammon and Nate Seltenrich

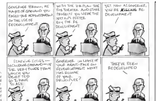
Jerry Brown probably wouldn't be governor if not for redevelopment. As mayor of Oakland, he exploited redevelopment dollars to resurrect his political career. Indeed, his signature accomplishment as mayor, his 10K Plan for downtown, depended heavily on redevelopment money and would not have been possible without it. Brown was keenly aware of that fact and had argued as mayor that the rebirth of Oakland's downtown and uptown areas would not be possible without huge public subsidies derived from redevelopment. However, such revitalization efforts may now be a thing of the past, because late last week the California Supreme Court approved Brown's plan to kill redevelopment outright.

The high court's decision represents a devastating blow to Oakland and other urban areas. It likely will mean that they will have to disband their redevelopment agencies completely, lay off thousands of workers, and immediately transfer local property tax proceeds to the state. For Oakland, it also likely means the elimination of a sizable portion of the city's Community and Economic Development Agency, costing Oakland hundreds of jobs. In addition, the ruling represents a major hit to affordable housing efforts in Oakland, as many of them depend on redevelopment dollars.

Brown's plan, which is now state law, also promises to decimate Oakland's beleaguered finances. As the *Express* reported last year, it could require the city to slash $59 million in spending, including up to $20 million from its cash-strapped general fund (see "The Hidden Costs of Jerry Brown's Plan," 1/26/2011). The decision also may force the layoff of seventeen cops from the already understaffed Oakland Police Department, because the officers' salaries are paid by redevelopment money.

The high court's decision stemmed from a proposal that Brown made last year that was approved by the state legislature. Brown had argued that redevelopment was taking too many property tax dollars from education and other state services and needed to be eliminated. He also noted — correctly — that redevelopment had become corrupted in some parts of the state, particularly in well heeled suburban areas that were using the money to build strip malls and benefit big box retailers.

But instead of fixing the problem, and limiting redevelopment to blighted urban areas that desperately need help, as the program was originally intended, Brown and the legislature hatched a "compromise" that would have allowed redevelopment to continue if cities transferred some of the money to the state. But in an ironic twist, the high court rejected this compromise, ruling that it violated Proposition 22, a voter-approved initiative that prohibits the state from raiding local government coffers.


GOVERNOR BROWN, AS MAYOR OF OAKLAND YOU BASED YOUR ADMINISTRATION ON THE USE OF REDEVELOPMENT
WITH THE 10K PLAN, THE FOX THEATER AND OTHER PROJECTS YOU WERE THE NATION'S POSTER BOY FOR REDEVELOPMENT
YET NOW AS GOVERNOR, YOU'RE KILLING REDEVELOPMENT
STARVING CITIES — INCLUDING OAKLAND — OF THE VERY FUNDS FROM WHICH YOU BENEFITED SO I HAVE TO ASK
GOVERNOR, IN LIGHT OF YOUR ABOUT-FACE ON REDEVELOPMENT WHAT HAS BECOME OF YOUR PRINCIPLES?
THEY'VE BEEN REDEVELOPED

(The court, however, said that the elimination of redevelopment agencies did not violate Prop 22 because the legislature created redevelopment agencies in the first place so it had the power to kill them.)

For Brown personally, the elimination of redevelopment also is steeped in hypocrisy. Not only does he owe his political turnaround (from radio personality to mayor to governor) to redevelopment, but he got married at a place that was constructed with the help of redevelopment — Oakland's historic Rotunda Building. He held his gubernatorial inaugural bash at another historic Oakland building that needed the help of redevelopment — the Fox Theater. And finally, his beloved charter school, the Oakland School for the Arts, would have no home inside the Fox were it not for redevelopment.

The Return of the Parkway

The Parkway Theater is finally on its way back — albeit in a new home. The *Express* received confirmation from The New Parkway's J. Moses Ceaser late last week that after more than a year of searching for a place to reopen Oakland's beloved theater pub, he signed a lease for a new location in the Uptown Art Murmur district. The announcement arrived not a day too soon: December 30 was the last business day before Ceaser would have had to return hundreds of thousands of dollars in start-up funds contributed by more than one thousand investors for the endeavor, according to an agreement reached earlier this month.

The theater's new location will be at 474 24th Street, a 7,800-square-foot former sheet glass factory currently used for special events. It is located around the corner from The Stork Club and Korean Plaza. Landlord (and former Parkway patron) Matthew Iglehart also owns a number of other properties in the area, including the spaces occupied by Vessel Gallery, Mercury-20 Gallery, and Two Mile Wines a block away on 25th Street.

"They came to us and said they would love the Parkway there, which would fit with their idea of doing an arts district," Ceaser said. "He said, 'Whatever we can do to get the Parkway there we would love to make happen.' He's really the first one who has done that."

From the outside, the boxy warehouse is nondescript and, as it stands now, a tad uninviting. Unlike 25th Street, 24th Street is devoid of casual foot traffic and other art institutions. Current neighbors include an adult video store five storefronts away at Telegraph Avenue and a large, mid-century apartment complex one door to the east. "I think it will create some challenges for us," Ceaser said. "I'm knocking down the attendance figures, knowing that it won't have the facade some of the other places did."

Still, he promises that the inside of the warehouse, while about 2,500 square feet smaller than what he would've liked, will meet the Parkway's needs. He plans on investing around $600,000 to $700,000 in capital improvements and another $700,000 or so in assorted start-up costs, with an end goal of creating a two-screen theater modeled, at least in spirit, on the original Parkway Theater at 1834 Park Boulevard. Opening day should be sometime next summer or fall. The theater's two screening rooms will be able to seat about 240 people total, Ceaser said, and will be accompanied by a cafe/bar area with seating for twenty to thirty and a "good-size kitchen" for preparing pizzas and a wide range of other foods that patrons can bring into the theater and enjoy during films, just as at the old Parkway.

Three-Dot Roundup

A five-year old boy was killed by a stray bullet in East Oakland on Friday, becoming the third young child murdered in the city in 2011. It also was Oakland's 110th homicide of the year, making Oakland's murder rate the same as in 2009. The city had 95 killings in 2010. … And Oakland City Hall gadfly Sanjiv Handa died last week. Handa was a fixture at city council, planning commission, and port commission meetings for the past two decades. He was 55. ●

Seven Days is culled from our news blog, 92510.

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LEGALIZATION NATION

HANDICAPPING LEGALIZATION IN 2012

California to win, place, or even show? A 2012 initiative forecast.

By David Downs

When elected leaders fail, people power can still prevail. Registered voters heading to the polls this fall for elections in Colorado, Washington, and perhaps California will have a chance to enact historic cannabis legalization in 2012.

A Colorado group said it will file 155,000 signatures with the state on January 6 — enough to qualify the group's recreational cannabis legalization and tax initiative for the November ballot. Similarly, a group in the state of Washington said on December 29 that it filed at least 355,000 signatures to get on the November ballot.

In California, groups need to turn in 504,760 verified signatures by mid-April. One California legalization group recently stated that it has gathered 20,000 verified signatures so far while two other groups that are circulating petitions have yet to gather any signatures.

The libertarian-leaning state of Colorado seems to be the most promising, with an experienced, well-funded, well-organized group called the Campaign to Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol. Campaign co-director Mason Tvert said the group needed 86,105 verified signatures and will turn in almost double that amount for the state to verify. The group initially filed eight different marijuana legalization initiatives in 2011, but then "went with the one we preferred," Tvert said. The campaign used paid signature-gatherers — as most groups do these days — as well as about 500 individual volunteers and 150 businesses. Various polls show about 50 to 54 percent of Coloradoans in favor of legalization, Tvert said.

The Campaign to Regulate Marijuana Like Alcohol faces opposition from law enforcement officials, as well as more radical reformers who want to repeal all cannabis laws — period. If the Colorado Initiative passes, the cannabis industry would be similar to the state's tightly regulated medical marijuana industry, with licensed growers, technicians, and retailers. Medical marijuana dispensaries also could apply for a license to sell to anyone 21 or older with proof of age.

A group in Washington has also become a force to reckon with. On December 29, New Approach Washington turned in more than 355,000 signatures to the Secretary of State's Office, which will likely place "Initiative 502" on the ballot. Washington requires at least 241,153 verified signatures to qualify for the statewide ballot.

Initiative 502 also would create a system of licensed growers, processors, and stores along with a 25 percent excise tax. Adults aged 21 and over could buy up to an ounce of cannabis, a pound of edibles like brownies, or 72 ounces of cannabis-infused liquids. About 57 percent of registered Washington voters support legalization of personal possession of up to an ounce of marijuana and a 25 percent tax, according to a December poll of 613 registered voters conducted by Survey USA.

Like Colorado's effort, New Approach Washington also faces opposition from both cops and radical legalizers. Initiative 502 creates a THC blood limit for drivers. Critics call it unscientific and say regular cannabis users who drive sober will test over the limit and go to jail.

In California, meanwhile, three ballot initiatives are gathering signatures, while two are pending review by the secretary of state and if approved, will also enter circulation. They're all long shots, but in the lead is Regulate Marijuana Like Wine from retired judge James P. Gray of Orange County. Campaign co-organizer Steve Kubby of Lake Tahoe said the group has collected more than $100,000 in campaign donations for the last quarter of 2011. The group collected 10,000 validated signatures in its first two weeks of circulation using volunteers, he said.

"Like Wine" needs 494,000 more verified signatures by its own deadline of March 20, Kubby said. While that sounds like a lot, he is confident they will make it. "We are absolutely on target," he said. "When we did Proposition 215, we struggled along until we finally got the funding we requested and we were able to wrap up the signature collection in about five weeks," he said. "We're getting the donations."

Kubby pointed to various polls by Gallup and *The Economist* that show majority support for legalization. But the next twelve weeks are bound to be a nail-biter for the group and others.

The efforts to get the "Repeal Cannabis Prohibition Act of 2012" on the ballot suffered damage in December with the ouster of campaign director Craig Beresh. Beresh wrote in an email to *Legalization Nation* that the group's plan is "doomed before it starts. With no money and no experience or proper leadership this can't be done. Even the signature-gathering company can't guarantee that they can get it done on time," he wrote.

Repeal Cannabis co-author and Santa Rosa attorney Joe Rogoway said Beresh was dismissed because "he was a nightmare to work with" and "toxic." The group will begin gathering signatures this year using paid gatherers. But the group will not report taking in any campaign donations in the fourth quarter of 2011. They have until April 19 to hit their goal of 790,000 unverified signatures.

"It's still a lot," Rogoway said, "but I think we are going to make it."

In a distant third is a proposal to further decriminalize pot. But it has neither funds nor signature-gatherers, said Bill Zimmerman, author of the proposal.

Late entries to the ballot measure game include two more petitions awaiting state approval to circulate: one that would regulate, control, and tax medical marijuana statewide, and a legalization scheme called the California Cannabis Hemp and Health Initiative.

California's fractious legalization community is sabotaging itself, Zimmerman said. Rogoway was more hopeful. "It's our victory to lose. I think we've learned from 2010, and a unity coalition is emerging," he said. "I would say 'Don't count California out.'" ●

David Downs@gmail.com

This column is culled from our blog of the same name.

ECO WATCH

THE POWER PLANT CLUSTER

Environmentalists are challenging a group of East Bay power stations that are exploiting a loophole in federal law

By Robert Gammon

Typically, a major new power plant must meet strict air pollution and greenhouse gas regulations. But by clustering several small fossil-fuel plants together in the same area, energy producers can effectively exploit a legal loophole and avoid the tougher rules placed on large facilities. Several environmental groups allege that PG&E and energy companies are doing just that with four smaller power plants in the East Bay, and that the cluster will produce more pollution cumulatively than would a large plant. They argue that the cluster thus presents a danger to public health and endangered species, particularly the rare Lange's Metalmark butterfly.

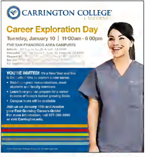
Last month, San Francisco's Wild Equity Institute, Richmond's Communities for a Better Environment, and the Center for Biological Diversity filed an official notice of their intention to sue the California Energy Commission, the Environmental Protection Agency, and several power plant owners and operators for authorizing, constructing, and operating the cluster of four natural-gas power plants in Antioch and Oakley. Over the past three years, the California Energy Commission has approved three new power stations within one mile of the existing Contra Costa County Power Plant in Antioch. The environmental groups are challenging the power plants under the federal Clean Air and Endangered Species acts.

"Power plants right next door to each other will emit more pollution than a major source," said Brent Plater of the Wild Equity Institute. "And each is just under the limit" of being considered "a major pollution source." As a result, the plants have not been subjected to the same tough rules that would govern a major facility.

The environmental groups contend that the cluster will emit enough cumulative pollution to push the Lange's Metalmark butterfly to extinction. The butterfly is endemic to the Antioch Dunes, and the nitrogen emissions from the power stations are changing the dunes' soil conditions and killing off the Lange's Metalmark caterpillar's sole food source — the naked stemmed buckwheat.

Previously, the Wild Equity Institute and Communities for a Better Environment challenged one of the power plants — a PG&E station in Antioch — in court over concerns for the Lange's Metalmark. But that litigation failed to protect the endangered butterfly.

The environmental groups realize that their new court action will not directly halt construction of the plant cluster. But they hope the litigation will result in stricter pollution controls for each facility — and perhaps delay construction to a point in the future when PG&E concludes that they're no longer necessary because of an increase in renewable energy production. ●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First Friday

ART OPENINGS & EVENTS

See the Art Gallery listings in the *Express* for more information on East Bay art showings.

Spend an evening supporting local arts!

Some venues offering art openings and/or special events on First Friday January 6th.

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1601 Paru St.

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1412 Solano Ave

BERKELEY

Berkeley Art Museum
2626 Bancroft Way

Berkeley Potters Guild
731 Jones St

Kala Gallery
2990 San Pablo Ave.

Urbanity
1887 Solano Ave.

OAKLAND

21 Grand
416 25th St.

4707 Gallery
4707 Telegraph

57th Street Gallery
5701 Telegraph Ave

Anna Edwards Gallery
237 East 14th St

Actual Café
6334 San Pablo Ave

Bay Area Visual Arts Network
455 17th St.

Bellevue Club
525 Bellevue Ave

Bites off Broadway
365 45th Street

Book Zoo
14 Glen Ave.

Café Van Kleef
1621 Telegraph Ave

Clausen House
650 Grand Ave

Collaborate Photography Studio and Art Gallery
431 13th St

The Compound Gallery
1167 65th St.

Creative Growth
355 24th St.

The Crucible's Cathedral Gallery
1615 Broadway

Five Ten Studio
831 Broadway Ave

Forthrite Gallery
5857 San Pablo Ave

Front Gallery
35 Grand Ave

Gamma Space
6608 San Pablo Ave.

Hatch
492 23rd St

Joyce Gordon Gallery
406 14th St

Krowswork Gallery
480 23rd St.

Kuhl Frames + Art
412 22nd St

The Layover
1517 Franklin St.

Levende East
827 Washington St

Lireille
3960 Piedmont Ave

LoBot Gallery
1800 Campbell St.

Luka's Taproom & Lounge
2221 Broadway

Macarthur Barthur
4030 MLK Way

Paradiso Lounge
2272 Telegraph Ave

ProArts
150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza

Pro Arts @ Latham Square
1611 Telegraph Ave

RAW Gallery
1951 Telegraph Ave.

Red Door Gallery
416 26th St.

Rock Paper Scissors Collective
2278 Telegraph Ave.

Rooz Café
1918 Park Blvd

Royal Nonesuch Gallery
4231 Telegraph

Rowan Morrison
330 40th St.

Smokey's Tangle
4709 Telegraph Ave.

Somar Bar and Lounge
1727 Telegraph Ave.

Spice Monkey Café and Restaurant
1628 Webster St

Stocks + Stones
815 Broadway

Studio One Art Center
365 45th St.

Swarm Studios & Gallery
560 2nd St.

The Swee(t)Art Drawing Gallery
6602 San Pablo Ave

Tech Liminal
268 14th St

Temescal Arts Center
511 48th St.

Thelma Harris Art Gallery
5940 College Ave

OAKLAND ART MURMUR

Buzz Gallery
2318 Telegraph Ave.

Chandra Cerrito Gallery
25 Grand Ave.

Classic Cars West
411 26th St.

Era Art Bar
19 Grand Avenue

Farley's East
33 Grand Avenue

FM Gallery
483 25th St.

Great Wall of Oakland
Back wall on Grand Ave between Broadway and Valley

Johansson Projects
2300 Telegraph Ave.

Manna Gallery
473 25th Street, Suite 6

Mercury 20
475 25th St

The Moon
447 25th St.

Oakopolis
447 25th St

Photo
473 25th Street

Roscoe Ceramic Gallery
473 25th Street, Suite 5

SLATE Contemporary
473 25th Street

Studio Quercus
385 26th St.

Vessel Gallery
471 25th St.

Warehouse 416
416 26th St.

SAN LEANDRO

UrbanSpace Gallery
411 Washington St

If you are an East Bay venue offering a First Friday evening art event, please email your information to Promotions@EastBayExpress.com to be included in the February directory.

EAST BAY EXPRESS

BECK'S

Students learn English at Lao Family Community Development Inc. in Oakland. Momo Chang

POVERTY STRICKEN

A new report shows that Oakland's refugees from Burma are stuck in extreme poverty, with up to 80 percent unemployed

By Momo Chang

Hae Htoo lives in a one-bedroom unit in East Oakland with five other family members. The twenty-year-old arrived in the US six months ago and hopes to learn English and find a job. But a recent report by San Francisco State University and nonprofit Burma Family Refugee Network shows that refugees from Burma who now live in Oakland, such as Hae Htoo, are facing dire circumstances. Most arrived in the US during a severe recession and have little to no English skills.

"The recession is nationwide," noted Russell Jeung, SF State professor of Asian American Studies who led the project. "The difference with Oakland is that it's hit harder by the recession, has even more unemployment and less jobs."

An estimated 84,000 refugees originally from Burma have made the US their new home since 2007. About seven hundred have resettled in Oakland. Karen, Karenni, and other ethnic minorities make up the majority of these refugees. Many fled Burma, now Myanmar, to escape military attacks and persecution and lingered in Thai refugee camps or in Malaysia for years. Those accepted to come to the US receive a few days of cultural orientation before boarding a plane.

The community-based research project found that 57 percent of Oakland's Burmese refugees live in extreme poverty, 63 percent are unemployed, and 64 percent have poor or no English skills, even though some have been in the US for four years. Among Karenni, 81 percent reported that they are unemployed, 90 percent live in extreme poverty, and 90 percent have no high school education. The first wave of Karenni refugees arrived in 2009, so there was no existing network.

Of the nearly two hundred people surveyed, the majority are living in extreme poverty with an income of less than $1,000 a month for a family of five. Those surveyed say their top needs are English classes, interpretation, and healthcare. More than two hundred students in Asian American Studies classes helped administer the surveys as part of a class. The surveys were conducted at health fairs with Burmese, Karen, and Karenni and other interpreters, and the answers are self-stated.

Some who work with the population say the unemployment rates in the report are higher than what they've experienced. Kathy Chao Rothberg, executive director of Lao Family Community Development Inc., a nonprofit that assists refugees and other job seekers, worked with about one hundred Burmese refugees in Oakland last year. The organization is able to place the majority of job seekers. "They still can get a job as long as they're willing to do it," said employment director Mai Quach. Jobs are in retail such as at Wal-Mart, or in manufacturing, laundry, or food services, and mostly pay just above the minimum wage of $8. The organization has close relationships with many employers and assists with on-the-job training. Most refugees learn about Lao Family through word of mouth.

But even those employed are living in poverty — 75 percent, according to the report — since jobs may be short-term, part-time, and low-wage. The study also found that some people eligible for welfare were not on it. Another paradox is that 90 percent said they had doctors, but healthcare was still one of their top problems, due to the language barrier. "Even though they have doctors and insurance, they still don't get healthcare," said Jeung. "They didn't understand how to get an appointment, or if they are given a prescription, how to take their drugs."

Due to a mixup, one woman was referred to get an abortion when she wanted to continue the pregnancy. Her interpreter was Burmese while she was Karen. Some Karen and Karenni only speak their native tongue and not Burmese, or have a hard time understanding Burmese. Fortunately, they were able to catch the misunderstanding in time.

In another case, one man had glaucoma but had to wait for several months for his MediCal to process. The delayed surgery left him nearly blind in one eye.

Kwee Say, a community health specialist at Asian Health Services who speaks Karen and Burmese, said that the highest need population may be elderly Karenni who speak neither Karen nor Burmese. Say is one of two Karen-speaking medical interpreters in Alameda County. There may be no Karenni medical interpreter.

Hae Htoo gave birth to a newborn daughter just two months ago. That morning, she felt contractions but wasn't sure if she was going into labor. By the time she was ready to give birth, she could not find a ride to the hospital. She gave birth in the bathroom; her husband caught the baby.

After giving birth, her neighbor was told, through a phone call with Say, to call 911. Following the 911 operator's instructions as translated by the neighbor, Hae's husband tied one of his shoelaces around the umbilical cord and waited for an ambulance. "I was not scared at all," said the soft-spoken Htoo. Their baby is healthy.

Mental health is also an issue; more than 70 percent reported stressors that impaired them. (The survey included culturally appropriate answers such as feeling "heaviness" or "head is hot," mental states that prevent someone from focusing or being able to work.) Jeung said mental health issues stem from both war trauma and the acculturative stress of having to adapt to a new land.

Learning English is a top priority, since without it people have to rely on translators to go with them everywhere and to get anything done.

On a Thursday morning at Lao Family's vocational ESL class — one of the only remaining adult ESL classes left in Oakland — seventy students practiced speaking English and writing things down on a calendar with teacher Ann Collen and a volunteer teacher who speaks Karen and Karenni. More than half the class is from Burma. For some, English is their third or fourth language.

More than one hundred people are on the waiting list. Oakland's adult classes were slashed by nearly 90 percent in 2011 because of statewide budget cuts. "I want to learn English and find a good job," Yi Yi Win, who is Burmese Rakhine, said through a translator. "I want to be self sufficient, and I want my child to be educated."

Though the numbers in the report are bleak, there have been small steps forward. Since October 2011, the US State Department has more than doubled funding for initial resettlement from $900 to $1,850 per person for their first three months of life in the US. $725 goes to staff salaries and operating expenses at places like the International Rescue Committee, a nongovernmental organization that has a contract with the State Department to resettle refugees, and $1,125 goes to families for rent, furniture, and spending money. It was the most significant increase in about thirty years, noted Ken Briggs, interim executive director of the International Rescue Committee in Northern California, and the funding is just for the three months.

Other strengths include the Oakland community, which has a history of refugee resettlement. "This is an incredible place, resource-rich," said Briggs, who is from Arizona. "I think if we pull together, we can make a greater impact."

Briggs and Rothberg both agree, in general, that the population's needs could be better served. Places like the International Rescue Committee, which has resettled the majority of Burmese refugees in Oakland, along with Catholic Charities of the East Bay, are the initial points of contact with refugees, finding housing for them and picking them up from the airport. But after a few months, refugees must find assistance elsewhere. Some fall through the cracks. The report recommends a "one-stop" location where many of the services are together, since access to translation, transportation, and money is a barrier to service.

Briggs hopes the International Rescue Committee will be able to offer long-term case management in the future (the Oakland office currently has three full-time direct service staff). "I would like to see services within the resettlement agencies that provides support for a longer period [than six months], particularly with job search and case management."

In the meantime, some cannot wait. Social services continue to be cut. Even if refugees qualify for MediCal food stamps, that doesn't cover rent, transportation, and basic utilities. Some families with children are eligible for welfare or CalWorks. The lifetime cap was recently cut from five to four years. Others are eligible for General Assistance or Supplemental Security Income, both of which are extremely low.

Most are eager to work. "I want to stand on my own two feet and not rely on government assistance," said Yi Yi Win, a mother of one who arrived just three months ago.

But Hae Htoo, a mother of three who arrived six months ago, is worried. Her husband will be laid off from his bakery job in three months. "I am worried we won't be able to pay rent and bills," she said in her native Karen through an interpreter. She lives in a one-bedroom apartment with her husband, brother, and three children.

Zar Ni Maung, co-founder of the Burma Family Refugee Network, said that even folks who have been here since 2007 still struggle. Some are exhausting their CalWorks lifetime benefits. He fears some refugees will remain a permanent poverty-stricken underclass.

"They've been here long term now," he said. "Who's going to pay for their rent? Who is helping them find a job? A lot of people have been placed [in jobs], but they do not continue going to work or have been laid off. Nobody seems to be looking into why this is happening. They don't have skills. The issues are here. How are we going to fix it?" ●

To read the report, go to CCI.sfsu.edu/currprojects

Editor@EastBayExpress.com

BY THE NUMBERS

Among Oakland's Burmese refugee population,

- 63 percent are unemployed. Those who are employed have sporadic, low-wage jobs.
- Among Karenni, 81 percent are unemployed, 90 percent live in extreme poverty, and 90 percent have no high school education.
- 57 percent live below the threshold for extreme poverty, making less than $1,000 for a family of five. Most of the remainder lives below the poverty line.
- 38 percent speak no English and 28 percent speak English poorly.
- 74 percent say lack of English is their biggest barrier to accessing healthcare.

Some of the report's recommendations include more accessible ESL classes, skilled interpreters, job training and employment programs coupled with ESL, support for microenterprise projects, one-stop centers, making healthcare more accessible, and support for grassroots organizations formed by people from Burma.

Coach Rob Collins: success will depend on his ability to find balance in his life

Stephen Loewinsohn

Coach Collins

Richmond High's Ken Carter was immortalized in a movie, but his replacement, Rob Collins, is back and the Oilers believe he's the real deal.

By Paul Gackle

The Richmond Oilers used to be one of the proudest high school basketball teams in the East Bay. As the city bustled with optimism in middle of the last century, the Oilers dominated the hardwood, bringing home eight league titles in seventeen years. But when the city changed in the Seventies and Eighties, a confluence of variables — poverty, violence, drugs, racism, and neglect — crippled the school's athletic department. For the next quarter-century, the Oilers were the laughing stock of local basketball, finishing in the cellar year after year.

"When you have four or five different obstacles in your way, not everyone is going to be able to jump over them to be part of a team," explained Darrin Zaragoza, Richmond High's athletic director.

But the team's image flipped like a switch the day Ken Carter, a former All American, returned in 1997 to take over as head coach. Carter was known for being a drill sergeant, and he quickly whipped the players into shape. The Oilers opened Carter's second season with a perfect 13-0 record before he locked them out — he literally padlocked the gym doors after 15 of 45 players failed to meet a contractual agreement to post a GPA of 2.3 or better.

ESPN, CNN, and a caravan of local news teams quickly swarmed Richmond High. "I'm also an employer," Carter told the press. "I want these kids to be employable. I care about what happens to these kids ten years from now."

Rush Limbaugh sang Carter's praises and the coach made appearances on the *Today Show* and *Good Morning America*. Then-Governor Gray Davis attended the gym's re-opening ceremony, calling the Oilers coach "a hero." Eventually, MTV made a movie, with a stern-faced Samuel L. Jackson as Coach Carter.

But locals say the real story was never as glamorous as the media spectacle made it seem. Parents, teachers, and even some players were holding their tongues. "It was the strangest news conference: none of the kids or parents would say anything — not a word," said Richard Gonzales, a Richmond native who covered the story for NPR. "An old friend from high school pulled me aside and said, 'This story stinks. It's not at all what it looks like.'"

Afterward, the team was never the same. The Oilers stumbled through the rest of the season, posting a 6-7 record before getting bounced in the first round of the North Coast Section playoffs. After that, the Oilers slid back into mediocrity, failing to make the playoffs three years in a row. Carter stepped down to launch a career as a motivational speaker. He wrote a book, carried the Olympic torch through Richmond, and even coached a made-for-TV sport on the Nashville Network called SlamBall.

The Oilers found themselves without a coach just three weeks before they were scheduled to start the 2002-03 season. At the final hour, the school hired the last guy anyone in the East Bay basketball community would have pictured as the face of the Richmond Oilers: a raving, ranting Chris Farley lookalike who'd spent his entire career coaching in the suburbs. But in Rob Collins, the Oilers found a kindred soul.

Collins bonded with the players in ways that Carter never had. Kids growing up in Richmond know all about violence and adversity, and Collins treated them like family. He used his own money to buy them sports gear and meals, and filled a room next to his office with food so that they would never go hungry. The players responded. In just four years, Collins led the Oilers all the way to the state tournament for the first time in the school's history.

But then he abruptly quit, lured away to a well-heeled school by a pay raise and a big-time budget. His passion and temperament, however, rubbed some parents the wrong way, and he resigned after just two seasons in Pleasanton, saying he was through with high school sports forever. But then when his mother died a year later, he found himself desperately in need of distraction, so he returned to Richmond High. In his absence, the Oilers had slid back into the basement, putting together a dismal 4-44 record in two years and losing games by as many as 75 points.

Now, after two strenuous rebuilding years, Oilers basketball is back. It's even spelled out on the T-shirts the players wear to school: "Oiler Pride: From nothing to upstart, from upstart to champion, from champion to dynasty." This year's team also has talent — a veteran point guard who averages thirty points a game and a couple of big men who are a handful for any opponent.

But success will depend on Collins' ability to inspire these Richmond kids to believe. In the process, he'll also need to control his emotions, stay healthy, and find balance in his life. If he can swing it, he and his team may once again rise to the top of the California high school basketball rankings. If not, he may very well flame out, and the Oilers could recede into obscurity.

Rob Collins was never the most gifted athlete on any of his teams. Throughout his childhood, he was told there was only one sport he'd ever be good at — football. In 1977, as a sophomore at Las Lomas High School in Walnut Creek, he was a big kid who looked the part: 6'3", 220 pounds, with thick bowling-pin arms and a little Buddha belly hanging over his waistband. He lettered in three sports, but he only had eyes for one — basketball.

On the court, Collins could catch anything, but when he ran he may as well have had a piano tied to his waist. He was too short to play down low and too slow to patrol the perimeter, so he concentrated on all the little things that required more grit and determination than skill. "He was a player who got the most out of his abilities," recalled Dave Girsch, Collins' high school basketball coach. "He was always the guy who was on the floor fighting for loose balls, rebounding, doing all the dirty work inside that no one else wanted to do."

Collins' love for the game infected his teammates. Girsch said it was like having a coach on the floor: "He played hard and expected everyone around him to play hard. Most of the success we had was because of Rob."

But at times, the fire inside Collins burned too hot. In four years as a high school athlete, he was ejected from one football game, one baseball game, and four basketball games.

Collins now says that he was born to coach, but he wouldn't have figured it out if it wasn't for a stroke of luck. In 1985, he was unemployed after flunking out of Cal State-Hayward and falling to field-down jobs as a fishmonger, a wine salesman, a carpenter, and a garbage man. He even tried to run his own animal excrement cleaning business, Poop 'N Scoop (the phone number was 935-POOP), but that venture got flushed down the toilet, too. Then one day he learned that his old freshman basketball team at Las Lomas needed a coach. He called the school from a pay phone and was hired on the spot.

Two years later, Collins jumped over to Acalanes High School in Lafayette to reunite with Girsch, who was running the Dons' basketball program. As an assistant, it was Collins' job to fire up the locker room before games. "Lord knows what he said in there, but when they came out they were ready to play," Girsch remembered. "He was very, very good at motivating kids to go out there and do their best."

Collins replaced Girsch as coach of the varsity team three years later and the Dons immediately started winning. "Can't keep a girl, can't hold a job, can't write a check without bouncing it, but I can coach basketball," Collins said.

As the wins mounted, word spread through the high school basketball community that the sideline show at Acalanes was one of the best tickets in the East Bay. Mark DeLuca, head coach at De Anza High School in Richmond, finally went to a game after friends badgered him for weeks. "They were like 'This guy's crazy. It's worth it.' So I went and he was totally nuts."

Collins looked like a 325-pound wind-up toy, hurting up and down the sideline throughout the game. He was red-faced and intense, screaming so loud that his vocal chords sounded like they were shredding. His team fed off of his energy. "I could tell right away that he was really tight with his players," DeLuca recalled. "If a team loves their coach, they'll play really hard for him."

That summer, DeLuca invited the Acalanes team to play in his Pinole Valley tournament, just so he could watch "that crazy guy." After the tournament, Collins' check bounced, but DeLuca didn't think much of it until his doorbell rang a few months later. "This weirdo's at my front door, and he's like, 'Hey man, here's the money I owe you.' From that moment on we've been best friends."

Collins' coaching style was a natural extension of the passion he showed as a high school athlete; he demanded his team's best effort every night. Practices were, in his words, "mild torture": two straight hours of running, defensive shuffles with bricks, plus a bevy of mind games designed to break even the toughest kid's will. Every drill was a competition with winners and losers — losers run. "There were no excuses that were any good, man. I was in your face and if you didn't do it right, you were running, and if you ran and threw up, then you cleaned it up," Collins said.

Still, he was a guy's guy and a player's coach, who had a natural genius for knowing what strings to pull with each player. "He definitely knew how to get the fire out of us," remembered Chris Gilbert, who went on to play hoops at UC Santa Cruz after graduating in 2001. "For me personally, I liked that he got in my face and challenged me. I liked to prove him wrong."

On Collins' teams, no one was a star and everyone had a role: rebound, take charges, set picks. "Even our bench players prided themselves on being bench players — they called themselves the roughriders," said Justin Smith, the Dons' point guard in the late Nineties. "They knew what they were supposed to do and were happy doing it."

Smith said the team bought into Collins' excruciating program because he cared about the players off the court. When they had problems, he listened without judgment. He offered advice but didn't preach. "I remember he helped me out a lot when my parents were going through a divorce," Smith said. "I think he got all of his players to really give their hearts because he gave you his."

The team won 75 percent of its games between 1996 and 2002, and the same year that Coach Carter was grabbing national headlines in Richmond, Coach Collins was named Coach of the Year by the *Contra Costa Times* for lead-

Although tough, Collins has always been known as a guy's guy and a player's coach. Stephen Loewinsohn

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ing the Acalanes Dons to their first state tournament in the team's history.

Yet parents complained about Collins every year. "Rob's style of coaching probably wasn't the best fit for Acalanes," Girsch said. Things really heated up after several kids were caught throwing furniture into a hotel pool on a road trip to Crescent City in 2002. According to Collins, parents said the incident proved that he was no longer a suitable role model for teenagers. Dan Birdsoe, the school's athletic director at the time, declined to comment, saying: "I always thought that Rob was really good with his players." Eventually, Collins resigned, saying he was finished with high school sports.

As the 2002-03 season loomed, the Richmond Oilers still hadn't replaced Coach Carter. Principal Haldee Foust was scrambling, so she reached out to Mark DeLuca, formerly a PE teacher at Richmond High. He responded: "Talk to the guy who replaced me."

So Foust approached Collins. "She goes, 'So hey, Collins, I hear you're a basketball coach.' And I said, 'No, no, that ain't me,'" Collins recalled. "Then she said, 'Nah, nah, somebody told me that you were Coach of the Year. Will you think of taking over here at Richmond?'"

Collins quickly learned that Richmond basketball was vastly different from what he was used to in the suburbs. Most of the Richmond players were traumatized from losing friends and family to gun violence; a majority of the kids didn't have relationships with their fathers and many went through the school day without eating. They were unmotivated, disruptive, and often tardy. "I remember the first meeting. The kids were looking at me like, 'Who is this big fat guy, this white dude?'" Collins said. "They weren't buying into me at all. I could see that in their eyes."

But the team bonded over the summer, traveling all over the Bay Area to compete in tournaments against some of the region's best teams. Collins would buy the kids barbecued ribs for lunch and take them out for pizza after the games. It was a nonstop party and the team became a family. When classes started in the fall, Collins gave players a ride to pre-class practices, piling them into his truck before sunrise. He paid for gym bags, sweat pants, and basketballs out of his own pocket. He also cleared out a storage room next to his office, turning it into a team room stocked with Gatorade, Top Ramen noodles, and peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. His point guard slept on Collins' couch for three months after the boy was locked out of his mother's house. "He took care of us like we were his own, like we were his kids," said Rick Coleman, the team's three-point specialist.

The same brash and abrasive coaching style that offended parents at Acalanes endeared Collins to his players in Richmond. "People were saying, 'Five black guys aren't going to listen to a white guy,'" said Eli Holman, who's now playing college basketball at the University of Detroit Mercy. "But it's not about race, it's about respect."

It was also about humor. Everyone laughed the day Collins danced around the locker room like Chris Farley, singing along with the music that was pounding from the gym's PA system during halftime: *Don't you wish your girlfriend was hot like me? Don't you wish your girlfriend was a freak like me?*

Collins continued to forge deep, intimate bonds with his players, just as he had in Lafayette. But the relationships took a more urgent tone in Richmond. "He took me in as a son," said Holman, who was temporarily sidelined during his senior after being shot in the right shoulder. "He said, 'You don't have to resort to violence, come to me instead.' You'd be surprised how many times I went to Coach Collins."

The chemistry was visible on the court, too. The *Contra Costa Times* described the scene after the eleventh win of Collins' second season with the Oilers: "Witness Collins' connection with the kids, which on Tuesday was manifested in Collins performing a full-on victory dance as his teammates surrounded him. Once in the locker room, Collins made it a point to go to every player and congratulate him with a handshake or a bear hug."

In his fourth year, Collins took the Oilers to the state tournament — the first in the team's history. They were eliminated in the first round, but with most of the starters returning for the 2006-07 season, the town was buzzing with talk of a state title. But the hope was punctured a few weeks later when news broke that Collins was skipping town to coach the Amador Valley Commodores in Pleasanton. "I left them," Collins said. "I turned on them all because I wanted to make more money, thinking that was going to make me happy."

Collins' phone started ringing almost immediately after the final whistle of the 2005-06 season. Don Underwood was retiring after 25 seasons at Amador Valley, and athletic director Len Cesario thought Collins could fill his shoes. At first, Collins brushed the suggestion aside — why leave Richmond when the team was so close to winning a state title?

But as Amador Valley pressed its case, Collins wavered. At Richmond, he scrambled to find the bare necessities like ice and tape while the basketball team at Amador Valley had its own luxury bus, team shoes, and a budget of about $30,000 a year. The fans in Pleasanton followed high school sports with Midwestern zeal; the city even has a cafe that serves meals named after every coach in town (Coach Collins' dish was bacon and eggs). "I finally asked myself, how can I turn this shit down?" Collins said. "I'd have to be crazy to say no to an extra $35,000" in salary.

But Collins fell apart. He may have looked rather GQ prancing down the sideline in $500 suits, but his weight was creeping close to 400 pounds and he was taking eleven ibuprofens a day to soothe the pain brought on by heel spurs that he said felt like razorblades slicing through his Achilles.

His physical deterioration was accompanied by a decline in mental health. After losses, he'd often stay up all night smoking cigars in his backyard, brooding over broken plays and missed opportunities. He resented the daily emails from parents bemoaning decisions he made about playing time. He became abrasive. At the first parent meeting of the 2007-08 season, he said: "We're talking about playing time today, and that's it for the rest of the season. You want playing time? You get playing time in practice."

Eventually, a parent complained to the school district, and even though Collins was exonerated, it reminded him of getting run out of Acalanes. As time passed, he wallowed in regret. "In Richmond, he felt responsible for making sure the kids made it to school, had dinner — they were his family," said Cesario, the school's athletic director. "In Pleasanton, the kids have moms and dads, they don't need a family." After two years, Collins resigned, saying he needed to quit this time to "save his life."

As Collins unraveled in Pleasanton, the Richmond High Oilers won the team's first NCS championship, earning another trip to the state tournament. Collins watched from the bleachers as his kids brought home the NCS title — a prize that has eluded him in more than 25 years of coaching. "Some of us were in tears when we looked up into the stands and saw Collins," Holman recalled. "We won that championship for him."

After most of the Collins-era players graduated in 2007, Oilers basketball relapsed to its pre-Carter state of hopelessness. In two seasons under Coach Donnye Ross, the team compiled a 4-45 record, losing games by lopsided scores of 97-26, 109-30, and 109-42.

Basketball aside, Ross also was managing the personal traumas of his players. Three kids' fathers had been murdered and another had witnessed his brother's murder — he was shot multiple times in the back of the head at a bowling alley (his step-brother had also been murdered a few years earlier). And then, midway through his second season, one of Ross' own players was murdered. The victim's brother was also a member of the team. "It was very, very difficult," Ross said. "When you look at the dynamics of coaching in an environment like that, it makes you really evaluate where you want to be."

By the last game of Ross' tenure, the Oilers had only eight players left in the program.

Collins, meanwhile, had been rehired as a physical education instructor at Richmond High in June 2008, but he kept his distance from the basketball team; he needed to get healthy. "My doctor told me everything that was wrong with me: heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity —

Richmond's Isiah Brown may be one of the best players in the East Bay

Stephen Loewinsohn

and that I wasn't going to be around very long" without some significant lifestyle changes.

That year, Collins hit the gym before sunrise every morning, riding the bike for a half-hour, running sprints another half-hour, then lifting weights for a couple more hours later in the day. As the year progressed, a bunch of students started dropping in to pump iron with him. "It was probably one of the coolest times in my life because he was there to talk to me and help me stay positive when my life was getting really negative," said Kalam Mouton, who'd lived in six different homes that year. By the end of the school year Collins had dropped more than one hundred pounds.

But tragedy struck over the summer when Collins' mother suffered a heart attack and died. "She was my support," Collins said. "I could do no wrong in her eyes, she always had my back." In the fall, Mouton and a couple other kids from basketball team pressured the principal into rehiring Collins. "They kept saying, 'You gotta hire Collins, you gotta hire Collins,'" said Principal Julio Franco. Collins was reluctant at first, but he eventually agreed. "I needed something to do because the only thing that was on my mind was the pain I was going through," Collins said.

In a matter of weeks, he was picking up the pieces of the program he had abandoned a few years earlier. He committed himself to a new philosophy: teacher first, coach second. "Let's face it. Last time, when I was driving those guys all over the place, I knew they were damn good players," Collins said. "If you're truly a teacher, it's about the development of a young person, watching them become a more complete person."

But his comeback season didn't follow the Hollywood script. The Oilers did manage to win eight games — double the total of the previous two years combined — but the team was plagued by infighting. Collins said most of the boys were suffering post-traumatic stress and the culture of distrust was too embedded to change overnight. "You need about three years with a kid to really make a difference," he said. So he planted seeds with his freshmen.

One bright spot was the emergence of sophomore Isaiah Brown, who dropped 27 points in a near upset of Berkeley High, a team that had beat the Oilers by more than 75 points the year before. Collins lost his cool only once all season, but ironically, it was during the team's only league win, after he overheard several of his players talking trash behind Brown's back. "You're all talking shit from the bench the whole fucking time and I'm fucking sick of it!" he screamed, spit flying across the huddle. "He's a part of this team just like everyone else!"

Later, after the bus unloaded at Richmond High, Collins opened up to his JV coach, Rick Coleman, in the school's dark, vacant parking lot. "Coaching sucks," he said. "I've got no wife, no kids, no grandkids. I'm all alone." They talked strategy for a couple of minutes before Collins added: "I hate to yell at them. I feel like a jerk."

"You gotta remember, most of these guys don't have fathers," Coleman replied. "They need someone to get in their faces sometimes, pull the man out of them."

As the Oilers sputtered, Collins slid into depression. Instead of pacing up and down the sideline with a ring of sweat around his collar, he sat at the end of the bench, expressionless, resting his chin on an open palm. "I was a wreck," he said.

Things reached a breaking point on the night that a fifteen-year-old player on an opposing team collapsed from a heart attack on the court. It put Collins' entire career into perspective. The next day, he told his players that he was going to take a few weeks off.

The guys were out of uniform, lined up on the baseline in hoodies, baseball caps, and sagging jeans. "I used to be a hard-charging son of a bitch, man," Collins told them. "I used to hate other coaches. I'd talk shit to other teams' players. I'd get into refs' faces. I was out of control." He paused, his eyes glued to the gym's hardwood floor. "But my teams always won."

The gym was quiet as Collins continued. "I used to push kids — I'd push kids to the point where they'd pass out or throw up."

He paused again. The lines on his forehead grew more pronounced. "Now, I'm not giving up — I've never given up on anything in my life — but I am curbing things back. After last night's experience, how can I be sure that that's never going to happen to any of you?"

The rebirth of the Oilers started in open gym. Collins was spry after some time off in March 2010. He played with the JV kids (now his juniors and seniors) at 6:30 almost every morning, snatching rebounds, setting screens, getting after it any way he could.

As spring rolled forward, more and more people dropped in to play, even a handful of former Oilers who wanted to help Collins rebuild the program. The kids were awestruck when a pair of NCAA college basketball players,

Collins says his new philosophy is teacher first, coach second.

Stephen Loewinsohn

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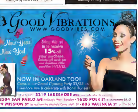

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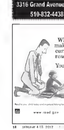
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Wendell McKinney and Eli Holman (the stars of the 2005-06 team) popped in and lit up the gym with an arsenal of high flying dunks. "They tell you what's expected of you if you play college [basketball]," said junior center Devante Anderson. "They let me know I can do it no matter what."

The Oilers improved throughout the 2010-11 season, but things didn't really gel until last summer. In June, Collins took out a $2,000 loan to pay for summer tournaments, night leagues, and gas for his assistant coaches. He also would load up the bed of his truck with sandwiches, chicken, and Gatorade so that the players could replenish between games. "He does stuff that average coaches wouldn't do," team member Isaiah Brown said.

The team bonded as they bounced around the East Bay, playing in cities like Pleasant Hill, Martinez, and Moraga. "It's like a brotherhood," Brown said. "If you've got something bad going on, you have a place where you can go and get away."

By fall 2011, Collins had Richmond High believing that Oilers basketball was back. For the first time since the Ken Carter years, the program now has three levels of hoops — freshman, *junior* varsity, and varsity — with a total of 45 players. The varsity team has returned Isaiah Brown, who may be the Alameda Contra Costa County Athletic League's most explosive scorer this year, along with a nucleus of juniors that Collins has mentored since his first days back.

The team stumbled in its opener at Vintage (Napa County), but the Oilers got people talking in the opening round of the Jeremy Jack Tournament by pushing Lincoln (San Francisco) — considered by many to be the best public school team in the city — all the way to the final buzzer. Brown had a chance to tie the game with less than ten seconds to play, but as he set his feet at the top of the three-point arc, the ball was knocked loose. Collins exploded, unleashing a four-letter tirade, adamant that his point guard was fouled. In the locker room, he flipped the trash can and mused about how badly the team had been hosed. "I know what's going on. Nobody wants to believe that Richmond can win." He scanned the room, eyes wide, looking possessed. Then he growled: "We believe."

Later that night, Collins realized he had screwed up, but it really sunk in the next day as he watched his two big men roll their eyes and complain after every whistle during the Oilers' game with San Marin. The team had a five-point lead at halftime, but Collins was dissatisfied. He wrote the word "adversity" on the whiteboard.

"What's that mean?"

"Obstacles?"

"Yes, obstacles. For instance, we all have friends who've been murdered, right? That's a fucking obstacle."

Sweat dripped from Collins' forehead as he paced the locker room.

"You think those refs didn't hear me last night? I caused the obstacle — it's my fault."

He stopped in front of a player who was experiencing some family turmoil. "You miss where you live, right? You miss your family, right son? That's an obstacle — we've got you."

Then he spun around and crouched until he was eye-to-eye with Raoul Chauchen, a 5-foot-five, 115-pound senior. "Hey, you don't like it that you're small, huh? That's an obstacle, right?"

Chauchen nodded.

"You don't give a fuck — you try hard! You can't even get your dad into this country, but I don't hear you whining because of it."

The Oilers' record this season doesn't tell how much better they're playing.
Stephen Loewinsohn

Tears leaked from the boys' eyes.

"I love you, man. You're a part of my team — you're one of my guys."

Then, he turned and pointed a finger at Brown, who was standing across the room. "You had any obstacles in your life? FUCK YEAH! You think I ain't got obstacles in my life?"

Collins stopped. He hovered over the team's two big kids and said, "Don't fool, don't make faces — take it like a man."

The Oilers opened the second half on fire, but they panicked in crunch time and let the game slip away. They lost to Pinole Valley the next day and then dropped three more games at the Walnut Creek Holiday Classic a week later. Then, they were blown out of their own gym by Bethel (Vallejo) in front of the largest crowd Richmond had seen in five years. At 0-8, the NCS playoffs suddenly looked like a moon shot.

Still, the Oilers' record didn't reflect how much better they were playing. Most of the games were close, even though almost every opponent they faced had made the playoffs the previous year. Rather than loading up his schedule with easy wins against lesser opponents, Collins wanted to test his players, even if he risked hurting them in the standings. "You have to challenge yourself so that you can get better," he explained. "That's the whole point."

If coaching was just about winning and making the playoffs, Collins says he wouldn't last: "It takes too much out of me, man. It's not healthy."

But as the Oilers' playoff aspirations faded, the challenge was keeping them motivated. Would they continue to push forward or would they give up?

The question was answered in the team's ninth game: a knock-down, drag-out fight with the Hayward Farmers in mid-December. The Hayward crowd was boisterous and the band was loud, but the Oilers remained poised. They pulled ahead a couple times and when the Farmers battled back, the Richmond squad didn't crumble. With less than a minute to play, the Oilers trailed by a single point. They needed a big defensive play.

The Oilers pressed and pressed until junior guard Cordell Waters knocked the ball loose with less than ten seconds on the shot clock. Both he and Brown scrambled after it, but the Farmers' point guard scooped it up and flung it to a wide-open teammate standing at the three-point line. Swish. The game was over.

The Hayward faithful belted out the familiar victory song, "Na Na Hey Hey Kiss Him Goodbye," and a Richmond JV player responded with a raised middle finger. Collins screamed at his thirty non-varsity players sitting in the bleachers. "Everybody sit down and shut up!" Back in the locker room, he punched the whiteboard with a right, then a left. The team was speechless.

As the Oilers filed out of the gym, they were greeted by a long line of laughing, dancing Hayward fans, who pointed and chanted insults: "You suck!" "Losers!" "We just beat your ass!"

"Don't say a word," Collins commanded. "Look straight ahead and get on the bus."

The Oilers boarded one by one and rode home in silence.

In the old days, the Oilers would have run for at least ninety minutes after losing such a close game, but instead Collins put practice on cruise control. His players' tanks were empty. They ran a few basic drills while Collins hung out at mid-court discussing the previous night's drama with his coaches. "This is my first 0-9 team, and you know what?" asked Collins. "I don't think I've ever been this proud."

He strolled around the gym leisurely in his red, white, and blue Oilers pullover and camouflage cargo shorts, checking in with every kid along the way.

"You think we can beat Berkeley, coach?" asked guard Matt Conway.

"There's no reason why we can't beat everyone in the ACCAL if we keep doing our thing, man."

He provided encouragement, offered advice, and told a few jokes. A couple freshmen kids played one-on-one on a side hoop while a JV player sat in the bleachers with his nose buried in a textbook. Laughter permeated the gym. Collins shook his head. "Here we are. It's Friday night in Richmond and we're playing some basketball — *staying alive!*" Then he laughed and sang, *Staying alive, staying alive — ah, ah, ah, ah, staying alive.* ●

Editor@EastBayExpress.com

ARTS & CULTURE

Photographic Memories

How one Oakland resident is resurrecting the vintage photobooth

For some people, a picture is worth a thousand words. But for Lisa Mancini, a picture procured from a photobooth is priceless. The photo lab technician and longtime Oaklander's affinity for the medium started when she was a kid living in Santa Cruz, where she said the machines were once abundant in the city's mall and boardwalk. Today, Mancini's collection of photobooth strips fills a box three inches deep, with snapshots stretching back to her elementary school days. She's preserved pictures of friends, boyfriends past, and what she admits is probably way too many self portraits. Just how many strips she's saved over the years is hard to say: "It's like how many jelly beans are in this jar?" she postulated. "I don't know how many ... hundreds."

Photos from Mancini's collection.

It should be said that Mancini's photobooth mania is somewhat selective. To her, the only booths worth patronizing are of the old-school variety, the vintage booths that utilize photo chemicals and light-sensitive paper to develop photographs. What's so special about the old machines, she explained, is the process: the brief moments between each camera flash, the anticipation that builds while a strip develops, and then the potential chemical imperfections that give each photo a uniquely flawed appearance. "With a digital booth, I don't even see the point, unless you don't already have a digital camera or a camera phone," she said. "It doesn't seem any more special to me."

That's why Mancini grew perplexed in recent years to find the small remainder of old photobooths disappearing from the East Bay — either replaced by contemporary machines or removed altogether. Gone is the booth once stationed outside the Bancroft Clothing Co. in Berkeley, as is the booth that sat for years inside the Emeryville Public Market. The Alameda bar Lucky 13 housed a vintage booth up until earlier this year when the owners replaced it with a modern machine after one-too-many customers complained of the "eggy" smell produced by the old booth's photo chemicals.

So rather than sit idly and watch the objects she's revered since childhood fade away, Mancini decided to buy her own photobooth. She started saving money (the old machines are not cheap), did extensive research, and in July found a company in Montreal, Canada, that refurbishes and sells the eight hundred pound cameras. After waiting several long months for a booth to become available, Mancini pounced on the first machine that came up for sale. The camera arrived in Oakland last week, becoming what she believes (and what this reporter's research found) to be the only publically operating chemical photobooth in the East Bay.

Rather than keep the machine to herself, Mancini worked out an arrangement with Steve Stevenson, the owner of 1-2-3-4 Go! Records (420 40th St., Ste. 5, Oakland), to keep the booth in his store's backroom venue space, where, beginning this week, patrons can take $3 black-and-white photos during shows and regular store hours. And Mancini, who's been studying up on photobooth maintenance to ensure that the booth endures, said that if the venture ever pays for itself she'll consider procuring a second machine for another location. Why? "Because people still care about photobooths — it's not just me," she said. "And because you look so much better in a black-and-white photo. And if you don't, you can just tear it up and no one has to know."

— Cassie Harwood

PICKS

Cohen-Bray House Holiday Tea

Pinkies up, people. The historic Cohen-Bray House (1440 29th Ave., Oakland), a Victorian-style East Oakland landmark built in the early 1880s as a wedding gift for a formidable socialite couple, hosts three tours of the site (which is still [illegible] up for the holidays) followed by a formal sit-down tea in the house's dining room. Munch on dainty tea sandwiches, sip on tea, and snack on sweets, all of which will be served using family china and silver by costumed maids. Warm clothing recommended. Call to RSVP. On Saturday, Jan. 7, 12:30 p.m. and 3 p.m. $20-$25. CohenBrayHouse.info or 510-843-2906. — Cassie Harwood

Art a la Carte

Art a la Carte

Rather than spending time at a cafe hunched over a laptop, park yourself in front of an easel for Art a la Carte, a new step-by-step painting series for artists of all levels premiering in January at Actual Cafe (6334 San Pablo Ave., Oakland). Formed and facilitated by local painter Kerin Ment, how each two-hour painting [illegible] color mixing and composition, with periodic breaks to partake in the cafe's wine selection and other menu items, and to check out others' work. Materials are supplied, and participants go home with a finished painting. Drop-ins accepted. Mondays in January including Jan. 9, 6-8 p.m. $30. 510-463-1444 or ArtALaCarteStudios.com. — C.H

ATTRACTIONS

[illegible]

HEALTH & WELLNESS

[illegible]

KIDS

[illegible]

RELIGION & SPIRITUALITY

[illegible]

SALES PROMOTIONS, & FUNDRAISERS

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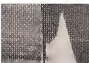

Detail of Hunter Longe's "Binary with Distortion."

Instrumentalities

Reflections on technology at Johansson Projects

Los Angeles art venues are currently abuzz with *Pacific Standard Time*, a celebration of the region's 1960s-70s Space and Light art. The series' show now at Orange County Museum of Art, *State of Mind: New California Art Circa 1970*, is coming to Berkeley Art Museum shortly, but if you can't wait, see *New Document*. Computerization has changed the world, including us; as the press release states, "Windows, gridded matrices, split-screens and drop-shadows … become an inherent aspect of making and viewing objects." Andrew Chapman, Matthew Drewing, Hunter Longe, and Hugh Zeigler explore this change in mentality using the "guilty" technologies.

Several also probe the interaction between the punch-card/coordinate systems of weaving and digital scanning. Chapman's "Notwithstanding," a digital print of undulating sheets of window screening, looks almost mathematically precise, while his oil painting "Folded the Away" is all painterly "analogue" smudges — with a folded cloth form (a shirt?) tucked behind the virtual glass. Longe's "Binary with Distortion," a silkscreen print on canvas, resembles a Clyfford Still abstraction with its sharp, hovering forms — until we look closer and discern that its source image of irregularly folded screening is actually arrays of zeros and ones, white on black, like an infinite odometer.

Drewing and Longe's "Open Screen Unit," a cubical aluminum frame sculpture loosely draped with a diaphanous mesh screen for digital projections, examines overlapping/colliding systems as well. So do Drewing's "Close Turns" pieces, wall-mounted sculptures resembling fabric-covered speaker boxes (remember them?) inset with miniature video screens covered with glass-bead membranes; the hexagonal patterns suggest insect-eye views of the world; and Longe's two manually warped "New Window" digital prints on linen, with their photos of sturdy door and window frames pulled and stapled into pleasing curves. The blacked-out mesh window is a nice conflation of Microsoft's logo and Duchamp's "Fresh Widow." Zeigler's abstract broken-stripe collages (very Sixties) and his related video animation, panning across that painting, now infinitely long, explore how system and method can generate new works.

Kudos for humor to Longe/Drewing for their video installation of a 3D CAD-generated form existing in cyberspace, which turns out to be a real sculpture spinning on a string in the room behind — and, what's more, a sculpture replicating the hieroglyphic Bible, the *Rosetta Stone*; and to Chapman for his curious diptych of two framed pictures fused together face to face, standing vertically like an ancient stele, with only the shipping labels for nonexistent galleries visible on the Fomecore backing. *New Document* runs through January 21 at Johansson Projects (2300 Telegraph Ave., Oakland). 510-444-9140 or JohanssonProjects.com

—DeWitt Cheng

ART GALLERIES

57th Street Gallery, [illegible] of the 57th Studio Gallery: With works by [illegible]. Through Jan. 28. 5101 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-654-0074, 57thStreetGallery.com.

Actual Cafe: We are the People in your Neighborhood: An [illegible] Retrospective With selected works from artists featured on the cafe's walls over the past year. Through Jan. 12. 6334 San Pablo Ave., Oakland. 510-653-8386, ActualCafe.com.

Albatross Pub: Paysage Fantastique Paintings by [illegible]. Through Jan. 28. 1822 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-843-2473, AlbatrossPub.com.

Art House Gallery & Cultural Center: 7 [illegible] With art by [illegible]. Through Mar. 15. 2905 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley. 510-472-3170, BerkeleyArtHouse.WordPress.com.

Berkeley Art Center: [illegible] The annual [illegible] exhibition [illegible] by artists from the Berkeley Art Center. Through Jan. 29. 1275 Walnut St. (in Live Oak Park), Berkeley. 510-644-6893, BerkeleyArtCenter.org.

Cafe [illegible]: [illegible] in the 1960's [illegible] Through Jan. 31. 2522 [illegible]. 510-644-3097.

[illegible] Gallery: The Gift of Art With works by [illegible]. Through Jan. 15. [illegible] Fourth St., Berkeley. 510-549-1815.

[illegible] Contemporary: [illegible] The first exhibition in the gallery's [illegible] series, with [illegible]. Through Jan. 21. [illegible]. Through Jan. 21. 480 23rd St., Oakland. 510-268-3494.

Collaborate Photography Studio & Art Gallery: Timescapes With photographs by seven members of the Bay Area Photographers Coalition: [illegible]. Through Jan. 25. 431 13th St., Oakland. 510-451-8176.

[illegible] Show [illegible] Gallery: First Friday Series Featuring work by [illegible]. First Friday of every month, 5 p.m. 1018 Pine St., Oakland. 510-451-6801.

[illegible] Art [illegible]: [illegible] The center's annual holiday show [illegible]. Through Jan. 8. 355 24th St., Oakland. 510-836-2340.

[illegible] One Public Place: Windows [illegible] Photographs by [illegible]. Through Jan. 27. 2150 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-849-0800.

Domain: John Vias Through Jan. 22. Free. 1389 Jefferson St., Oakland.

Doyle Studio Cafe: Energy Flowing and [illegible] Monotypes in water media by Judith Mesur. Through Jan. 31. Free. 5285 Doyle St., Emeryville. 510-547-3562.

[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] Employee Show 2011 With art made by [illegible] employees. Through Jan. 27. [illegible] 11th St., Oakland.

[illegible] Gallery: Looking Back, Then Into the Future With a retrospective of five artworks by Helen [illegible], including work from her [illegible].

Plus sculpture by [illegible] and photographs by Charles Lacky. Through Mar. 2. 2019 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-644-4930, ExpressionsGallery.org.

[illegible] Four Colors Screen Printing Art Gallery: [illegible] With [illegible]. Jan. 6-28. 1535 [illegible]. 510-830-7081, FamousFourColors.org.

[illegible] North, [illegible]: Four [illegible] California [illegible] portraits by [illegible]. Jan. 9-31. 1799 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley.

[illegible] With mixed media by [illegible]. Through Feb. 18. 1091 Calcot Pl., Oakland. 510-535-2760.

Johansson Projects: New Document With 3-D renderings and a multitude of printing methods by Andrew Chapman, [illegible] Drewing, Hunter Longe, and Hugh Zeigler. Through Jan. 21. 2300 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-444-9140, JohanssonProjects.com.

Joyce Gordon Gallery: David Gonzalez: A Retrospective An [illegible] exhibition of the artist's [illegible] drawings, which [illegible] political content. Through Feb. 25. 406 14th St., Oakland. 510-465-8928, JoyceGordonGallery.WordPress.com.

Kala Art Institute Gallery: Kala [illegible] Exhibition With [illegible] made by [illegible] with the Kala Art. Through Feb. 4. 2990 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley.

[illegible] + Art, Lil Tuffy 4th [illegible] With [illegible] art, gig posters, show prints, [illegible]. Through Feb. 11. 472 22nd St., Oakland. 510-875-5122.

MacArthur B Arthur: [illegible] With new work [illegible]. Through Jan. 8. 4030 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Oakland. 510-239-8138.

[illegible] Arthur.com.

[illegible] Gallery: The Life of Forms With [illegible] and mixed media works on canvas and paper by Mark Lightfoot, and new artworks by Lynn Pugesek. Jan. 6-28. 473 25th St., Oakland. 510-209-2305.

[illegible] Johnston, [illegible] A group [illegible] about the body, with works in traditional and experimental media by [illegible]. Through Jan. 30. 1291 Sixth St., Berkeley. 510-558-8000.

Mercury 20 Gallery: [illegible] of [illegible] Works With works by Berkeley artist Mary Curtis Ratcliff [illegible] the feminist spirituality movement of the 1970s to her pilgrimage to Jordan in 2011. Jan. 5-Feb. 11. 475 25th St., Oakland. 510-484-1105.

[illegible] Center Auditorium, Oakland: Sculptural [illegible] of watercolor and acrylic on layered paper by Judith [illegible]. On display at the Lake Merritt BART [illegible]. Through Jan. 31. 151 Eighth St., Oakland.

Mythos Fine Art and Antiques: Mythos [illegible] of Film Noir A new exhibition of paintings by [illegible]. Jan. 6-Feb. 5. 1747 Solano Ave., Berkeley.

[illegible] Museum of California: [illegible] Family Gallery Walk A family-friendly docent-led museum and [illegible]. Sun., Jan. 8, 11:15 a.m. Free with [illegible]. 1000 Oak St., Oakland. 510-318-8400, MuseumCA.org.

[illegible] Public Library: [illegible]: An Exhibition of Bird Photographs An exhibition of bird photographs by San Francisco children's librarian and wildlife photographer [illegible]. Through Jan. 31. 388 9th St., Suite 290, Oakland. 510-238-3400.

Oakopolis Creativity Center: A Week at Calistoga With paintings created on and [illegible] by a rustic ranch in Calistoga by Joell Jones, Logan Payne, Carla Saunders, Amy Schaffer, Rae Whittaker, and Karen Worth. Through Jan. 14. 447 25th St., Oakland.

Pro Arts Gallery: Pro Arts Juried [illegible] 2012 Featuring work in various media by [illegible].

King, [illegible]. [illegible] selected by the Chicago-based curator [illegible]. Through Jan. 13. Free. [illegible] Arts Night [illegible] gallery hours in conjunction with Oakland's Art Night. First Fridays of every month, 6-8 p.m. Free. [illegible] 150 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Oakland. 510-763-4361.

[illegible] Cafe: East Bay [illegible] Artists Holiday Art Show A group exhibition of oil, acrylic, pastel and watercolor paintings, photographs, and prints. Through Jan. 17. 5492 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-8567.

SLATE contemporary: Visible/Visitor With paintings by Jane [illegible] and photography by Michele [illegible]. Jan. 6-Feb. 25. 473 25th St., Oakland. 510-326-6658.

Studio [illegible]: In The Blog With [illegible] from the collection of [illegible]. Jan. 6-Feb. 26. 385 26th St., Oakland. 510-452-4870.

[illegible] Gallery: Of Sunder, Not Art exhibition by [illegible] and Paul Morgan with [illegible] prints and collages of spaces and scenes constructed from [illegible] and found paper materials. Jan. 11-Feb. 29. 502 2nd St., Oakland. 510-893-2117.

The [illegible] Playhouse [illegible] An exhibition of [illegible] from art [illegible], a Playhouse Series [illegible] by the [illegible] and playfulness of children's artwork. Through Jan. 31. [illegible] 1828 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-451-8100.

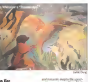
[illegible] Gallery: [illegible] Wind and [illegible] [illegible]'s solo exhibition [illegible] installations and process drawings. Jan. 6-Feb. 18. [illegible] with site-specific installations and process drawings by [illegible]. Jan. 6-Feb. 18. [illegible] Gallery [illegible] Talk [illegible] her process in making and planning her site-specific installation work and [illegible] on her new wind drawings. Sat., Jan. 7, 2-4 p.m. 471 25th St., Oakland.

YWCA Berkeley: Energy Flowing and Show in [illegible] With monotypes in water media by Judith Mesur on display in the [illegible]. Through Jan. 26. 2600 [illegible] Way, Berkeley. 510-848-6370, YWCA-Berkeley.org.

PICKS

A Week at Calistoga

Last May, six painters converged on a Napa Valley farm for a painting retreat led by the eminent artist Leigh Hyams. The work inspired by that creative getaway comprises this group show featuring organic abstractions by Joell Jones ("Legacy," "Rosebud"), Logan Payne ("Calistoga," "Calistoga II"), Amy Schaffer ("Emerging," "Back to Life"), and Karen Worth ("In a Green Haze," "Flower Study"); sympathetic depictions of animals by Carla Saunders ("Willie in Red," "Willie Hanging Out in the Sun") and Rae Whittaker ("Dreamscape," "Sunbonnet"); house-themed mixed-media and prints ("Moon House," "Gold House") by Payne; and photos of Hyams accompanied by artistic mottos, e.g., "Wild freedom is the privilege of the disciplined artist," and "A life in art is a journey, not a destination, and painting, for me, is being a commodity, is a necessity of life." *A Week at Calistoga* runs through Jan. 14 at Oakopolis Creativity Center (447 25th St., Oakland). 510-663-6972 or Oakopolis.org. *—DeWitt Cheng*


Rae Whittaker's "Dreamscape."

DeWitt Cheng

John Vias

B.VAN has begun exhibiting in the private lobby gallery of a new downtown apartment building. Its current show features John Vias' elegant night photographs depicting silent, deserted East Bay locales. The satisfying compositions and saturated color from his long exposures — matters of informed guesswork and hit-or-miss bracketing — in pieces like "Large Boat Winch," "Wall and Hedge," "Fairy Tale Benches," "Tracks and Field," "Shiny Door," and "Search and Palms" are theatrical and romantic despite the apparent human absence. Vias: "Night brings on a curfew, emptying streets and sidewalks. The even sunlight of the day gives way to dramatic pools of light, creating impromptu stages where the actors never arrive. … Time is compressed, movement is frozen. What is left is stillness and quiet." As he notes, the resulting scenes are familiar, yet strange. Maya Kabat's urban-abstraction paintings are also on view. *John Vias* runs through Jan. 22 at Domain (1389 Jefferson St., Oakland). 510-684-1886 or BayVAN.org. —D.C.

THEATER & DANCE

COMEDY

All-Female Comedy Open With Theatre The Wonderwoman, Sherri Chavan, [illegible] Lakshminarayanan, Colleen Stevens and Cara Tourgeman. Co-hosted by Joe DeMarco and Samson Koletkar. Thu., Jan. 5, 8 p.m. $10. 800-214-2009 [illegible]. Mitch Pearl's Jam House, [illegible] Stevens. 510-444-7371, [illegible].

Comedy at The Layover Weekly stand-up with rotating comedians. Tuesdays, 8:30 p.m. free. The Layover, 1517 Broadway St., Oakland. 510-834-1517, OaklandLayover.com.

Comedy Night Hosted by Tony Sparks. Thursdays, 7 p.m. free. Brainwash Cafe, 1122 Folsom St., San Francisco. 415-861-3663, Brainwash.com.

Comedy Open Mic Sign-ups at 5:30 p.m. each comic gets 4-5 minutes. Mondays, 7 p.m. $5. Tommy T's Comedy Steakhouse, 5104 Hopyard Rd., Pleasanton. 925-227-1800, TommyTs.com.

Elon Gold With George Lopez and hosted by Mark Pitta. Part of ARF's 21st anniversary Stars to the Rescue gala. Fri., Jan. 6, 7:30 p.m. $35-$75. Lesher Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. 925-295-1400, LesherArtsCenter.org.

Marga's Funny Mondays Weekly comedy and variety showcase featuring a rotating cast of comedians and hosted by local comedian Marga Gomez. Mondays, 8 p.m. $10. The Marsh Arts Center, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-704-8291, TheMarsh.org.

Open Box Comedy An open mic for veteran and up-and-coming comedians. Sundays, 8 p.m. one-drink minimum. Continental Club, 1658 12th St., Oakland. 510-473-8883, [illegible].

Open Mic Comedy Continues With clean, made-for-TV comedy hosted by Lolley Stanfield. Fridays, 9 p.m. $5-$10. Roda Repertory Theater, 3201 Boyse St., Berkeley. 510-652-2120.

Say Grooo Comedy Combo Show With Awkward Face. Saturdays, 8 p.m. $10. Pan Theater, 2135 Broadway, Oakland. 415-261-1641, PanTheater.com.

SF Comedy Showcase Sundays, 8 p.m. 88 Pound Lane, 444 Battery St., San Francisco. 415-397-4337, [illegible].

Street Soup Improv Comedy A monthly showcase of unrehearsed jokesters. First Saturday of every month, 8 p.m. $7-$10. Showcase Arts Center, 511 48th St., Oakland. 510-923-1074, ShowcaseArtsCenter.org.

The Gravity Show Comedy improv show with Awkward Face. Saturdays, 9 p.m. $10. Pan Theater, 2135 Broadway, Oakland. 415-261-1641, PanTheater.com.

LIVE VARIETY

Bandy Legal Presents *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* A screening of the cult classic with audience participation and a live cast performance. Plus a raunchy preview and games aplenty. Sat., Jan. 7, 11:45 p.m. $8-$10. $6 BandyLegal, [illegible]. Landmark Albany Twin, 1115 Solano Ave., Albany. 510-464-5980, LandmarkTheatres.com/Market/SanFrancisco/AlbanyTwin.htm.

Crucible: *A World Premiere Fire Opera* Mark Streshinsky directs a Crucible presentation, based on a short story by Hans Christian Andersen, which incorporates opera and aerial angles, performances, and fiery visual effects. Doors at 7:30 p.m. Jan. 11-14; 8:30 p.m., Jan. 18-20, 8:30 p.m., $45-$85. The Crucible, 1260 7th St., Oakland. 510-444-0919, TheCrucible.org.

Distinction Fusion Burlesque Cabaret Variety Show With performances from showcase of bellydancing by Trish & [illegible], Randy Johnson, Mae Wonders, [illegible], Fiona Zacman, Lolly Gagger, Sheba, and many more. Recurring Sunday of every month, 9-11 p.m. $10. [illegible] Art Bar and Lounge, 19 Grand Ave., Oakland. [illegible].

Radio to the Rescue XXI With retelling by George Lopez, music by Wynonna and Jeff Scott Soto, dance by [illegible], and more. A benefit for Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF). Sat., Jan. 7, 7 p.m. $75-$250. Lesher Center for the Arts, 1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek. 925-295-1400, LesherArtsCenter.org.

The Uncomfortable Zones of Fun: Experiments in Experience/Participation Performance Showman performance artist Frank Moore leads an improvised medley of musicians, actors, dancers, and audience members. Bring a musical instrument and an open mind. Sat., Jan. 7, 8-11 p.m. free. 510-526-7858, EmPlay.com. Temescal Arts Center, 511 48th St., Oakland. 510-923-1074, TemescalArtsCenter.org.

THEATER & PERFORMING ARTS

Becoming Julia Morgan [illegible] play about the Bay Area architect, [illegible] Book Theatre, [illegible] Stevens, and featuring Janis Stevens as Morgan. Sundays, Thursdays-Saturdays, 8 p.m. Continues through Jan. 8. $35. 800-838-3006, BrownPaperTickets.com. Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant Ave., Berkeley. 510-548-7800, BerkeleyCityClub.com.

Berkeley Rep's School of Theatre Sunday Sessions Theater lovers of all ages and experience are invited to check out the school's classes. Sun., Jan. 8, 1-3 p.m. free. Berkeley Rep School of Theatre, 2071 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-647-2973.

Disney's Phineas and Ferb With the musical cast of the TV show. Fri., Jan. 6, 4 & 7 p.m. $20-$80. Paramount Theatre, 2025 Broadway, Oakland. 510-465-6400, ParamountTheatre.com.

Don Reed's *The Kipling Hotel: True Misadventures of the Historic Pink 80s* Reed's one-man show chronicles his misadventures throughout the '80s, from Radio Shack to working as a stripper and a gigolo to life as a live-in vocal at a retirement hotel. Starting Jan. 7. Fridays, 7 p.m., Saturdays, 8:30 p.m. Continues through Feb. 12. $20-$50. The Marsh Arts Center, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. 510-704-8291, TheMarsh.org.

The Drunken City A one-time staged reading of Adam Bock's dark comedy which answers the question, "What if everyone was drunk?" Tue., Jan. 10, 8 p.m. $10. Douglas Morrisson Theatre, 22311 N. Third St., Hayward. 510-881-6777, DMTOnline.org.

Ghost Light Jonathan Moscone directs Tony Taccone's world-premiere production, based on the assassination of Mayor George Moscone. No performances on Radio dates, see at Radio Stevens to verify. Starting Jan. 6. Sundays, 2 & 7 p.m., Saturdays, 2 & 8 p.m., Wednesdays, 7 p.m., Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 8 p.m., Thu., Jan. 19, 2 p.m., Thu., Feb. 16, 2 p.m. Continues through Feb. 19. $14.50-$73. Berkeley Repertory Theatre, 2025 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-647-2949, BerkeleyRep.org.

God's Plot Mark Jackson directs his reinterpretation of the first play ever performed in the U.S., which from a colonial stab at The King of England. Thursdays, 7 p.m., Fridays, Saturdays, 8 p.m., Sundays, 5 p.m., Wednesdays, 8 p.m. Continues through Jan. 15. $15-$27. Ashby Stage, 1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-6500, ShotgunPlayers.org.

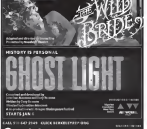
The Wild Bride Kneehigh Theatre presents a grown-up fairy tale about a girl's travels through a surreal wonderland

PICKS

Pak Han

God's Plot

Only a playwright like Mark Jackson would have the audacity to dredge up and dramatize the first play ever staged in America — a colonial satire called Ye Bare 'n' Ye Cubbe. And interestingly enough, it's still timely. Turns out the colonists were using a bear and cub to protest an unfair taxation system, which was funneling all the profits from their tobacco bumper crop back to rich aristocrats in England. Sound familiar? Jackson doesn't shy away from political subtexts in his own updated rendition, but what he's mostly interested in is the colonists' fixation with religion. The title of his play, God's Plot, derives from the idea that Puritans thought they were acting out a grand play for God — thus, they spent their lives performing, confessing, acting penitent, and always watching one another. The conceit is fairly cerebral, but the execution is thoroughly engaging, especially since it's staged as a musical. Daveen DiGiacomo wrote the score; Nina Ball designed the stark, churchy set; Juliana Lustenader and Carl Holvick-Thomas star. Through January 15 at The Ashby Stage (1901 Ashby Ave., Berkeley). $18-$27. ShotgunPlayers.org or 510-841-6500. — Rachel Swan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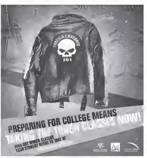
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AFTER THE FLOOD, THE LAUGHTER

Miss Pearl's is on hiatus, but Comedy Off Broadway soldiers on

By Rachel Swan

On the morning of October 22, Samson Koletkar got a rather disturbing phone call from Miss Pearl's Jam House, the Jack London Square restaurant where he and fellow comedian Joe Gleckler run a regular showcase. It turned out Miss Pearl's had flooded after a fruit truck knocked over a fire hydrant in front of the Waterfront Hotel, shooting huge geysers into the building.

"I got a call from the reception saying, 'The room's flooded, your equipment's in there, come and grab it,'" Koletkar said. He happened to be in Los Angeles, so he quickly dispatched Gleckler to save their sound system and lighting rig. By the time Gleckler arrived, the banquet room where they usually held comedy shows was inundated, with a hole in its roof. "He shows up and the place was like Japan," Koletkar said gravely.

Lucky for them, restaurant staff had salvaged most of their equipment — the most expensive stuff at least — so although the comedians had to cancel that night's edition of Comedy Off Broadway, they resumed the following night in a different room of the building, with a janky sign outside that said "Stand Up Comedy." The hosts advised patrons to bring their own refreshments for the time being, which wasn't such a problem given that Miss Pearl's is wedged in the same retail corridor as BevMo, Subway, and Ben & Jerry's. The audience complied.

So for the last two and a half months Comedy Off Broadway has soldiered on, even though Miss Pearl's still has papered-over windows. In fact, the showcase appears to be doing rather well. The hosts held three shows over New Year's weekend, and all were packed — New Year's Eve drew such a large crowd that they had to temporarily move the event back to the cleaned-up bar area at Miss Pearl's. On Sunday, Koletkar and Gleckler threw in an extra show with Fresno-born yukster Robin Cee as the headliner and local stalwart Sean Keane as the featured act. The kitchen closed early that night (it reopened for event catering after the flood, albeit on a much smaller scale), so the hosts provided their audience with complimentary cheese and Merlot. But for the sign outside, it looked like a wedding reception.

Show Details
Comedy Off Broadway happens every Thursday through Saturday at Miss Pearl's Jam House (1 Broadway, Oakland). 8 p.m. $10. ComedyOffBroadwayOakland.com

Still, the show killed. In fact, it could have held its own against any lineup in San Francisco, which is no small feat for a town that's used to getting sloppy seconds. Part of the night's success owed to Gleckler and Koletkar's talent for booking interesting lineups. This one included Monterey-based comic Rudy Martinez and juggler/magician Fred Anderson as openers, both of whom occupy distinct parts of the comedy ecosystem. Martinez joked about trying to be a Lothario in some podunk part of Montana where he was the only "Mexicano" for miles — the problem was learning to regurgitate his single semester of high school Spanish (e.g. *Dónde está el baño?*) in a convincing baritone. Anderson did card tricks and juggled rubber balls, catching one of them on his forehead with a loud smack — he later revealed it was rubber. Koletkar did a few bits about being a Jewish Indian immigrant (a subject he discussed at length at the San Francisco storytelling show *Previously Secret Information*), and Gleckler talked about being the only white kid at an inner-city school in Baltimore.

Samson Koletkar

Of course it was the featured set and headliner who really made the night a hit, and neither of them bore any resemblance to the other performers. Keane is a Cal alum, obsessive sports fan and borderline savant (he has a Tumblr blog called "Sports Centr"), and former contributor to UC Berkeley's ever-vaunted *Heuristic Squelch* zine. Famous for confessional humor, he's amassed a new cache of topical jokes about the A's (just as the team threatens anew to abscond to San Jose) and the recently razed Occupy Oakland encampment, where he performed back in October. (His assessment: "There's a thin line between that and yelling about your dick in a public place.")

Cee, who is a comely, six-foot-one, stylish African American woman with asthma, opened her set by scolding the organizers. ("Why am I the only black person on a lineup — in *Oakland*?" she asked.) Then she jumped into a whole series of impressions, clicking between characters with the speed of someone whose mind operates as a nonstop reel-to-reel. Her repertory includes Marge Simpson, Rosie Perez, Tina Turner, Tina Turner on the back of a motorcycle, Mariah Carey if you isolate the melisma, Texas AM radio hosts, a jilted blonde in some horrible redneck watering hole, her mother, her aunt "Whooo" (so-named for an overused sound effect), and a waitress at a roadhouse Chicken 'n Waffles joint, where even the fruit cup is fried. In the course of fifteen minutes, she managed to cover a pretty large swath of the American experience.

Gleckler and Koletkar pride themselves on having diverse acts, and they can actually brag about that with total sincerity. They've even decided to implement "themed" lineups for their Thursday shows in 2012, some of which rely on standard categories (all African American, all female) and some of which are adventurous ("all Southern," "anti-Valentine," "Comics in Recovery"). If the New Year's Day show is any kind of omen, then they should have a lot to look forward to in the coming year. Hopefully Miss Pearl's will reopen, too. ■

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LECTURES & LIT

Hunting for Himself

John Lescroart's latest thriller stars a P.I. searching for his own secrets

Just as it dominated headlines in late 1978, the murders and mass suicide at Jonestown have provided rich emotional veins for writers in the Bay Area and beyond ever since, from Armistead Maupin's *Tales of the City* series to Leigh Fondakowski's play *The People's Temple*. Now the tragedy finds itself at the center of *The Hunter*, the latest Wyatt Hunt mystery by Davis author John Lescroart. While the first two Hunt books followed the P.I. as he formed his agency and solved other people's whodunits, *The Hunter* finds him unraveling the truth of his own past — specifically, that of his birth mother's murder.

John Lescroart

"Given his age, and realizing that Wyatt would have been born sometime about 1967, I started casting about for interesting real world events that might have somehow played a role and that I could not too fortuitously connect to the modern era," Lescroart explained. "Upon reflection I realized that it gave me everything I needed in terms of resonance and narrative fodder, so eventually Jonestown became the center of things, and one that added what I believe is a huge and universal element to *The Hunter*."

Having one's own personal history affected by Jonestown is something deeply San Franciscan, and *The Hunter*'s gallivants through Nob Hill and Marin County — and discussions of the Giants, the fog, and Indian Summer — make the Bay Area as much a character in this book as it's been in Lescroart's *New York Times* bestselling series starring defense attorney Dismas Hardy and homicide cop Abe Glitsky. Lescroart's other inventions pop into one another's novels as needed, and Lescroart's fictional studio stable, he admits, allows readers to know, to an extent, what to expect when they see who's the star of the show. But Wyatt Hunt came about when Lescroart, who starts his tour for *The Hunter* at A Great Good Place for Books (6120 LaSalle Avenue, Oakland) on Thursday, January 5, realized that Hardy and Glitsky were getting a little long in the tooth for younger, hipper readers. "And suddenly, there was Wyatt Hunt, living in his converted warehouse with its half basketball court, having different love interests, wind surfing, jogging, driving around in his Mini Cooper — just being a lot more physical and active."

Though Hunt is in his third book, he's also in his third act, having seen military service in Iraq and been a Child Protective Services worker before taking up the mantle of private dick. Lescroart, too, is in his third act (at least), having previously led Johnny Capo and His Real Good Band for many years and worked in offices, bars, and moving vans. Finally, after contracting spinal meningitis while body-surfing in 1989, the then 41-year-old Lescroart woke from an eleven-day long coma and devoted himself, full-time, to writing. "The country music group Rascal Flatts has a song about that says something like *God bless the broken road that led me straight to you*," mused Lescroart, "and that pretty much says it all. All of those experiences taught me some things that allowed me to get through them and on to what I feel I was born to do, which is tell my stories and entertain my readers. Given that, I can't say I'd do anything differently." 7 p.m., free. 510-339-8210 or GreatGoodPlace.indiebound.com

— *Stefanie Kalem*

LECTURES

Jean Seitz: "Predators" The Livermore park ranger discusses past and present predators, from mammals and [illegible]. Sat., Jan. 7, 10 a.m., $2 donation. Sycamore Grove/Veterans Park, 1051 [illegible] Rd., Livermore. 925-960-2400. LARPD.dst.ca.us/Open_Space/Sycamore.html

Jeanne Woodford: "Oakland, Borders" The [illegible] director of Death Penalty Focus, who oversaw four executions as the undersecretary and director of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, discusses her efforts to end the death penalty in California and the rest of the country. Tue., Jan. 10, 7 p.m. [illegible] Center, 1400 Saint Mary's Rd., Moraga. 925-631-4088.

[illegible]: "My [illegible] as a [illegible]" [illegible] Club, the [illegible] days of [illegible] to various cities in Oakland, Europe, Africa and North America. Call [illegible] at 925-283-8378 to RSVP. Sat., Jan. 7, 9 a.m., $5 donation. Lafayette Christian Church, 584 Glenside Dr., Lafayette. 925-283-8304. LafayetteChristianChurch.org

Omar Barghouti: "Occupy Wall Street, Not Palestine!" The Palestinian researcher, commentator and human rights activist discusses the global struggle for justice and [illegible] in Palestine and [illegible] at his new book, *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*. Sat., Jan. 7, 7:30-9:30 p.m., $10; no one turned away for lack of funds. 510-548-0542. [illegible]. First Presbyterian Church, 2619 Broadway, Oakland. 510-548-0542. [illegible].org

LITERARY EVENTS

Alameda Good Books Club [illegible] library's family study room. Second Tuesday of every month, 6 p.m., free. Alameda Free Library, 1550 Oak St., Alameda. 510-747-7777. CityofAlamedaCA.gov/Library.

Alameda Library Book Club Discussing [illegible] *Faithful Place*, books in the Family Study room. Mon., Jan. 9, 6:30 p.m. Alameda Free Library, 1550 Oak St., Alameda. 510-747-7777. CityofAlamedaCA.gov/Library.

Anne Nesbet Launch party for the [illegible] novel *The Cabinet of Earths*. Wed., Jan. 11, 7 p.m. Books Inc. Berkeley, 1760 Fourth St., Berkeley.

Bay Area [illegible] Coalition Poetry Reading First Saturday of every month, 3-5 p.m., free. Strawberry Creek Lodge, 1320 Addison St., Berkeley. 510-843-8396.

Bilingual Family Storytime Preschool and [illegible] for the whole family presented in English and Mandarin. First and fourth Saturday of every month, 11-11:30 a.m., free. Oakland Public Library, [illegible] Branch, 388 9th St., Suite 190, Oakland. 510-238-3400. OaklandLibrary.org.

Diesel Book Group #3 Discussing [illegible] *The Tiger's Wife*. Mon., Jan. 9, 7 p.m., Diesel, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. DieselBookstore.com.

Elmhurst Branch Book Discussion Group A monthly literary circle for adults. Second Tuesday of every month, 5:30-7:30 p.m., free. Oakland Public Library, Elmhurst Branch, 1427 88th Ave., Oakland. 510-615-5727. OaklandLibrary.org.

[illegible] Library Urban Fiction Book Club Call [illegible] for monthly book titles. 510-615-5727. Second Tuesday of every month, 4 p.m., free. Oakland Public Library, [illegible] Branch, 1427 88th Ave., Oakland. 510-615-5727. OaklandLibrary.org.

Hella Slam and Speakeasy $5 Thursdays [illegible] Prophet [illegible] a weekly evening of hanging out, dancing, poetry, rap, food and more. With food, drink [illegible] and music by DJ [illegible]. Free before 10 p.m. Thursdays, 10:30 p.m., free-$5. Eastside Cultural Center, 2277 International Blvd., Oakland. 510-533-6629. EastsideArtsAlliance.com.

Lunch Poems A monthly noontime poetry reading series directed by UC Berkeley [illegible] and featuring a rotating selection of [illegible] reading [illegible]. [illegible] of every month, 12:10-12:50 p.m. Continues through May 5, free. LunchPoems.berkeley.edu. [illegible] Room, 101 Doe Library, Berkeley. 510-642-0137.

Martinez Library [illegible] Second Saturday of every month, 6:45 p.m., free. Martinez Library, 740 Court St., Martinez. 925-646-2898. [illegible].org/Locations/Martinez.html

Playreaders A weekly group for people to read aloud from great plays, changing parts frequently. Meets in the [illegible] Story Room. Wednesdays, noon. Berkeley Public Library, Central Branch, 2090 Kittredge St., Berkeley. 510-981-6100. BerkeleyPublicLibrary.org.

Poetry [illegible] A poetry reading and writing [illegible] facilitated by Emeryville Poet Laureate of Emeryville [illegible]. Tue., Jan. 10, 6:15-7:45 p.m. Oakland Public Library, Golden Gate Branch, 5606 San Pablo Ave., Oakland. 510-597-5023. OaklandLibrary.org.

The Rockridge Book Group A monthly book discussion group. This month: any of the books from [illegible] mystery [illegible]. Third Thursday of every month, 7-8 p.m., Jan. 12. Rockridge Library, 5366 College Ave. ... 510-238-[illegible]. [illegible].org/Locations/[illegible].html

Stories for Your Life Writing as meditation, whereby participants write in response to a reading in the beginning of the session. Monday about to the group in Oakland. Mondays, 9:15-10:45 a.m. Oakland Unitarian [illegible] Church, 1 Lawson Rd., Berkeley. 510-525-0302. UUCB.org.

More Listings Online
Get info about dozens more literary events at EastBayExpress.com or m.EastBayExpress.com

PICKS

Tony La Russa

This might be the closest the East Bay gets to the World Series for a while. Coach Tony La Russa — who led the A's to their 1989 championship and the Cardinals to their 2006 and 2011 titles — presents "World Series 2011: A Champ's Perspective" on Sunday, Jan. 8, at Lesher Center for the Arts (1601 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek), where he'll narrate clips of St. Louis' most recent battle for the crown and, for a few dollars more, answer your questions. 6 p.m., $25 or $115 VIP tickets with extended Q&A session. 925-943-7469 or LesherCenter.org. — *Stefanie Kalem*

Anne Nesbet

By day, Anne Nesbet is an associate professor of Slavic Languages & Literatures and Film & Media at Cal. By night (and presumably on weekends) she is the author of young adult fiction, with her debut novel *The Cabinet of Earths* arriving from HarperCollins shortly. On Wednesday, Jan. 11, at Books Inc. (1760 Fourth St., Berkeley), Nesbet reads from the novel, wherein twelve-year-old Maya — newly relocated to Paris — explores the city's magical underworld in a quest to protect her baby brother. 7 p.m., free. 510-525-7777 or BooksInc.net —*S.K.*

Omar Barghouti

In the lecture "Occupy Wall Street, Not Palestine!" on Saturday, Jan. 7, at First Presbyterian Church (2619 Broadway, Oakland), Palestinian activist and researcher Omar Barghouti connects the dots in the international fight for human rights. Barghouti will also sign copies of his new book, *Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions: The Global Struggle for Palestinian Rights*. 7:30-9:30 p.m., $10 (no one turned away for lack of funds). 510-548-0542. —*S.K.*

Omar Barghouti

Stephen Hermann

The marine meets the metaphysical in "Moby Dick: a Myth for our Time," a lecture by clinical psychologist Stephen Herrmann at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley (1 Lawson Road, Kensington). The lecture on Sunday, Jan. 8, is part of the weekly Personal Theology series. 10-11 a.m., free, but donations accepted. 510-525-0302 or UUCB.org. —*S.K.*

PUBLIC INTEREST

Amnesty International Berkeley Reading All are welcome. Second Monday of every month, 7:30 p.m. Diesel, A Bookstore, 5433 College Ave., Oakland. 510-653-9965. DieselBookstore.com.

Berkeley Metaphysical Toastmasters Club @ Amnesty Public speaking club with a "metaphysical" emphasis. First and third Thursday of every month, 6:45-8:45 p.m., free. St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave., Berkeley. 510-845-6830.

City of San Pablo: "State of the City" Luncheon With a "state of the city" address by Mayor [illegible]. At the San Pablo Golf Club [illegible]. Tue., Jan. 10, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m., $35. 925-242-0600. [illegible].org/[illegible]

Food Stamp Workshop for [illegible] County Members An Alameda County Community Food Bank representative discusses how to apply for food stamps. Second Tuesday of every month, 2:30-4:30 p.m., free. Oakland Public Library, Asian Branch, 388 9th St., Suite 190, Oakland. 510-238-3400. OaklandLibrary.org.

Foster Care and Adoption Info Workshop All [illegible] are welcome. [illegible] workshop, where [illegible] foster [illegible] can learn about adopting a child in need of [illegible]. Second Tuesday of every month, 7-9 p.m., free. AASK, [illegible], 8201 Edgewater Dr., Ste 103, Oakland. 510-553-1744, x127. AASK.org.

Free Book Exchange Give and get free books in all genres. Saturdays, Sundays, 9 a.m.-6 p.m., free. Bay Area Free Book Exchange, 3360 San Pablo Ave., [illegible] Berkeley. [illegible]. BookCoop.com.

[illegible] Branch [illegible] and [illegible]: We Are All At Risk [illegible] a screening of [illegible] Forever, [illegible] followed by a brief discussion led by [illegible] of Bay Area Religious Campaign Against Torture (BARCAT). Co-sponsored by Code Pink Golden Gate. Fri., Jan. 6, 7 p.m., $5-$10. [illegible].org. Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists, 1924 Cedar St., Berkeley. 510-841-4824. BFUU.org.

Lawyers in the Library Services provided on a first-come, first-served basis. Second and fourth Tuesday of every month, 5-7 p.m., free. Oakland Main Library, Eastmont Branch, Eastmont Town Center, Suite 211, Oakland. 510-615-5726. OaklandLibrary.org.

[illegible] Readers Group Discussing the "new normal" of [illegible]. First Saturday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., free. [illegible] Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-595-7417. [illegible].org.

Political Affairs Readers Group A discussion about the 2012 elections and other forms of struggle against [illegible]. Sat., Jan. 7, 11 a.m. [illegible] Library, 6501 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-595-7417. [illegible].org.

SPOKEN WORD

The Berkeley Slam featuring The Saint. Hosted by Betsy Cohen, the books [illegible] Simon, and [illegible]. With a rotating line-up of live [illegible] and DJs. Up to [illegible]. [illegible] days, [illegible] p.m. [illegible] Plough, 2111 [illegible] Ave., Berkeley. 510-841-2082. [illegible].com.

The Blue Café A weekly open mic for up-and-coming spoken word artists, poets, and comedians. Sign-up begins [illegible] p.m. Tuesdays, [illegible] p.m., free. Donny's Locker, 5617 [illegible] Ave., Oakland. 510-[illegible]. [illegible].com.

Last Word Poetry Series Poetry readings and open mic. First Friday of every month, 7 p.m. First Saturday of every month, 7 p.m., free. [illegible] Café, 1854 Euclid St., Berkeley. 510-841-0200.

[illegible] and the Alphabetical Band Bay Area [illegible] poet [illegible] reads from the book of [illegible] [illegible] *Alphabetician*, with [illegible] set to music and performed by [illegible] and the Alphabetician band. For all ages. Fri., Jan. 6, 8:30 p.m. 510-710-0079. [illegible], 4000 Oakland Ave., Oakland. [illegible]. Common [illegible].com

Second Mondays Poetry Night Poetry [illegible] by local poets, followed by an open mic. Second Monday of every month, 7-8 p.m., free. Albany Library, 1247 Marin Ave., Albany. 510-526-3720. [illegible].org.

Tourettes Without Regrets With [illegible] poetry, stand-up comedy, and more. Monthly, by Jamie and [illegible]. Thu., Jan. 5, 6:30 p.m.-midnight. $10. Oakland [illegible], 410 3rd St. [illegible]. 510-763-1146. [illegible].org.

Vagrant Poetics Open mic poetry. [illegible]. First Friday of every month, 5 p.m., free. Facebook/VagrantPoetics. Good Bellies Cafe, 6658 Telegraph Ave., Oakland. 510-594-8910. GoodBelliesCafe.com.

[illegible] Art [illegible] Library Night Presenters allotted three to eight minutes to share their [illegible] and stories. Singing begins at 5:15. E-mail [illegible] for more info. First and third Friday of every month, 6:30 p.m. [illegible], 15700 [illegible] St., San Leandro. 510-[illegible]. ●

Submissions for calendar listings should be e-mailed to Calendar@EastBayExpress.com or mailed to Calendar Editor, East Bay Express, 620 3rd St., Oakland, CA, 94607. Deadline is 14 days prior to the event date.

AQUARIUM AGE

NEW YEAR, NEW OPPORTUNITIES

For the week of January 4-10, 2012

By Ralfee Finn

It's a "hit-the-ground running" start to the new year, and like birds gathering seed before a storm, many of us are going to be collecting the threads of a variety of plans and projects. There's little more than two weeks left before we enter the retro-zone, an approximately seven month period filled with seemingly endless retrogrades that will have most of us attending to the details of whatever we forgot to take care of beforehand. Even if you manage to jump the gun, you're still going to need to pace yourself for the next couple of weeks. There's no use showing up for what promises to be a strenuous period exhausted from the preparations.

The good news is that there is plenty of positive planetary support for stamina and strength, as well as a strong spirit of cooperation. If you don't have anything that needs your attention, ride the current of the next couple weeks by pitching in where help might be needed. For those anxious about getting everything done, there's nothing like a helping hand to soothe stress and lessen tension.

The source of strength this week is a Mars/Sun trine, a vital, vigorous configuration that supports ambition, determination, courage and intentional activity. Even if you are not inclined toward competition, this is the astrological partnership that's sure to make you want to win. Mars symbolizes action, and is believed to rule the muscular system. The Sun represents our essential vitality, and when the Sun and Mars work together, we experience surges of physical power. Put this dynamism to work by applying it to all those areas in your life that could use a nudge. Especially put your body in motion. Run. Walk. Hike. Stretch. Swim. Just move, and make the most of it, because by the 20th, when Mars prepares for its retrograde phase, very little is going to move easily.

Mars goes retrograde on January 23, in Virgo at 23 degrees, and stays retrograde until April 13, when it goes direct, also in Virgo at 3 degrees. Mars thrives on forward movement, and when it seems to be lagging behind, as it does during a retrograde, we experience all sorts of Martian challenges — challenges that range from mildly impatient frustration to absolutely unbearable frustration. (Not kidding.) And because Mars represents the warrior, as the retrograde seems to stall plans and projects, many of us could feel inclined to up the ante by getting angry in all sorts of situations where we feel stuck, blocked, or impeded in our process. But don't misunderstand.

While Mars Retrograde might bring out the devil in some of us, Mars Retrograde is not the devil. And while Mars may not like retracing its past, we can certainly benefit from the review.

During the next several weeks, utilize the positive planetary support of the Sun/Mars trine to stay focused on all the things in your life that are related to movement — cars, trucks, buses, bikes, shoes, skates, skateboards, and schedules of every denomination. Push, but not to the brink of exhaustion. Most importantly, start practicing patience for yourself and your fellow travelers.

If you know your Ascendant and/or your Moon Sign, read that, too.

ARIES Soften your critical eye through the lens of compassion — not everyone has the same potential for bravery in the face of adversity. And remember to be thoughtful as well as kind.

TAURUS Be confident in your creativity and you'll find the self-assurance to convert your vision into the appropriate form or format. The value of your certainty will enhance the process as well as the product.

GEMINI The inclination to act on impulse persists, especially when it comes to issues of security. Have at it, but try not to mistake instant gratification for enduring satisfaction.

CANCER Take a deep breath and indulge your need to be everywhere at once. Even a determined effort to stay still could not keep you from multitasking at a level that most mortals could not achieve.

LEO There is a wide window of opportunity for you to make tangible financial gains, especially if you're willing to work as hard as you are capable of working.

VIRGO You're in the leadership role, a position that requires you to lead with your head as well as your heart. It doesn't seem that this will be a problem, as long as you listen closely to your followers.

LIBRA Reflect on how you want to arrange your home, whether the focus is on where you live or how you live. What's important is the capacity to inhabit your choices without hesitation or self doubt.

SCORPIO The question of how to remain independent even when you're part of a team is worthy of your attention. Think about how you can establish and maintain that kind of balance.

SAGITTARIUS Harness your ambition and aim it at all the goals you want to accomplish. You may not be able to finish every project, but you'll gather a powerful momentum that nothing can stop.

CAPRICORN You can try to convince others to accept your point of view, or you can simply allow for differences of opinion. Sounds like a no-brainer because it is.

AQUARIUS Part of the problem is that what you want to say is not exactly what others want to hear. I'm not suggesting you hold back, but advising you to continue to think before you speak.

PISCES Relationship challenges offer the possibility of profound personal growth, but only if you are willing to speak your truth as you simultaneously listen to the truth of others. ●

For More Info

Ralfee Finn specializes in Transformational Astrology. For readings, call 1-888-937-9284, write P.O. Box 343, New York, NY 10025, visit AquariumAge.com, or e-mail Ralfee@AquariumAge.com.

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Research Guides

You'll wait a while on weekends, but the soufflé pancakes are worth it. Chris Duffey

LONG LIVE BETTE'S

The popular West Berkeley diner approaches its thirtieth year with grace.

By Jesse Hirsch

It's been three decades since Bette's Oceanview Diner first colonized a small piece of West Berkeley's Fourth Street commercial corridor. Owner Bette Kroening is many things; dead isn't one of them. "I love it when people ask me if Bette is a real person or if she's alive," she grinned. "I think that means we've become an institution."

Over the eleven years that the *Express* has kept online archives, Bette's has garnered numerous Best Of awards — Best Diner, Best Breakfast/Brunch, etc. — but never its own review. Maybe a review seemed superfluous; at some point, a restaurant this beloved can sidestep a few official hurdles. Besides, tearing into the near sacrosanct Bette's would be like lobbing spitballs at a battleship.

Bette's Oceanview serves up breakfast and lunch to 11,000 people per month, in a space that seats 45. It's one of those picturesque dives-that-aren't-dives where famous people (a mix of real celebrities and "Berkeley famous") like to chill. It got the Guy Fieri treatment on *Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives*. Bette's was even featured in a Tide commercial, earning many thousands in royalties for Bette and her photogenically diverse crew — "We had one Hispanic waiter, one Asian waitress, a black cook ... those Tide people just loved us," said Bette.

Unless you go super-early, wait times can range from twenty minutes to two hours. New customers love to kvetch, but most people know this is a necessary hurdle. Ultimately, your vinyl booth, your four-top table, your seat at the counter: are not gifts; you've got to earn them.

Helping ease the waitlist pain is Bette's Austrian husband Manfred Kroening, a constant presence on the weekend door. Bespectacled, fastidious, and dressed in black, Manfred knows how to make you feel like both a nuisance and a dear friend. He can be brash and unaccommodating to complainers, but he rewards the patient with reassuring coos and bons mots. It's a beautiful and effective shtick, as no one wants to be on Manfred's bad side. He seated my party after nearly an hour and a half on a Saturday morning.

"Aren't you soooo glad you waited? Doesn't that look cozy? Look at that table. It was *made* for you! You are very lucky people," Manfred purred in his clear Germanic diction.

Bette's Oceanview Diner
1807 Fourth St., Berkeley
510-644-3230 or BettesDiner.com
Hours: Mon.-Fri. 6:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., Sat.-Sun. 6:30 a.m.-4 p.m.
Reservations not accepted
Cash, American Express, MasterCard, Visa

Sample Menu

Huevos Rancheros	$9.25
Soufflé Pancake	$12.95
House-Made Scrapple	$4.95
Pan-Fried Fish Filet Sandwich	$11.95
Goat Cheese and Pepper Sandwich	$11.95

He's right: the table was quite handsome. Bette helped design the space in the early Eighties, taking parquet-and-chrome diner memories from her Jersey childhood and hipping them up with space-age lighting, vaulted ceilings, and framed black and white prints of Miles Davis and Muhammad Ali. It's a studied look, but it avoids feeling self-conscious or contrived.

Bette's does not offer a menu that shifts daily, weekly, or even seasonally. I compared my menu to one from Bette's early days and found roughly 75 percent of the same items. Kroening was a fervent disciple of Julia Child technique, particularly her fondness for exactitude and consistency. She impressed these values on chef Darryl Kimball, who started working at Bette's when he was 19; he's now 47 (Bette calls Kimball her son, who "just happens to be a big black guy"). Same recipes, same chef, and a drive for consistency: Odds are the eggs you had two decades ago wouldn't be too different two weeks ago.

Bette's California Breakfast is a simple meal, poached eggs and ham in a lemon-herb butter sauce, served on toast with crisp, lightly herbed home fries and grilled tomatoes. The huevos rancheros also hit the mark, sunny-side-up eggs on flour tortillas, served with a mild house salsa, a melted cheese blend, and deeply smoky black beans.

The egg pancake soufflé, a staple since the beginning, is barely sweet and light as a late-morning fog. It starts on the flattop, then spends some time in the oven, so budget in a few extra minutes to your meal. Little pieces of seasonal fruit — cranberry and pear in mine — are layered in midway through the cook. I skipped syrup, not wanting to gum up the labyrinth of air pockets and caves.

The scrapple is also a Bette's mainstay: a mix of pork hocks and butt, seasoned with sage and cayenne and bonded into a fried oatmeal rectangle. It's an understated side, with less aggressive porky notes than expected.

Bette's breakfast often gets the star treatment, but don't sleep on the lunch menu. Cod filets receive a light pan fry in clarified butter, then are served on a toasted open-faced baguette with a confetti burst of greens and house-made tartar sauce. A warm goat cheese and roasted red pepper sandwich, gooey and funk-laden, was another departure from standard-issue diner grub.

Rotating daily specials are where Bette's really flexes its Berkeley muscles. In that arena I tried items ranging from the not bad (African squash soup, a mild, watery mix of root vegetables in broth) to the truly inspired (cream and butter-based veggie hash with roasted butternut squash, celery root, potatoes, and stuffed leeks and shallots).

But despite some Bay Area flourishes, Bette's is more preoccupied with technique than ingredient sourcing. Though she'd prefer organic meat, diner price points make it cost-prohibitive to shop from the fancy ranch. The produce, too, is a mixed bag, though Bette and Manfred now grow many items on their five-acre farm near Sebastopol. This year they raised tomatoes, kale, chard, "hella cucumbers," fruit from 120 trees, and 400 sugar pumpkins for their signature pumpkin pancakes.

Even in the off-season the Kroenings now spend three or four days a week on the farm; one senses it's the slow train to retirement. These days Manfred (who doubles as Bette's all-purpose handyman) gets fatigued from just a couple days working the door. Half of Bette's staff has been there more than ten years, and many old-schoolers are in the twenty-year club. But while you might feel concerned about the old diner's future, its energy remains strong and spirited. No need to fret just yet.

But I'll admit I'm a little bummed that there won't be a thirtieth birthday party. "We had big, crazy parties for our first, third, fifth, seventh, and tenth birthdays," Bette said. "I'm over it." ●

Jesse.Hirsch@EastBayExpress.com

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"Slangin'"
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Russell Moore works the grill at Camino

Chris Duffey

WHAT THE FORK

WHAT'S IN STORE

Top East Bay chefs, farmers, and restaurateurs look forward to the year ahead

By Jesse Hirsch

I finished out the year by talking with some of the East Bay's biggest food personalities, finding out what they are resolving and looking forward to in 2012. The responses were sincere, inspiring, and even hilarious.

Samin Nosrat, creator of the Pop-Up General Store, former sous chef at Eccolo: "Looking forward to: Writing! I've been scaling back in lots of ways in order to create more space and time for writing, which has always been my first love. New Year's resolution: To make stuffing at least once a month. That is to say, to find more delicious and unexpected ways to use up all of the fantastic bread from Pizzaiolo and Tartine that inevitably grows stale each week on my countertop."

Novella Carpenter, urban farmer, writer: "Looking forward to: My new book, co-written with Willow Rosenthal of City Slicker Farms, is coming out! It's called *The Essential Urban Farmer*, and is a how-to guide for growing food and raising animals in the city. New Year's resolution: I'm pregnant with my first baby — due any day now — so my resolution for 2012 is to slow down and enjoy the fruits of my labors."

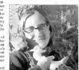
Kevin Best, co-owner of B Restaurant and Bar: "Looking forward to: NBA season, winter veggies, fresh snow in Tahoe, more time out of the office and in the kitchen. New Year's resolution: Not only growing our business but also becoming a more valuable member of our community. And trying to train my cat to use the toilet. Seriously, I think he can do it."

Amy Murray, chef and co-owner at Revival Bar + Kitchen: "Looking forward to: More goat, including expanding our array of cured meats and salumi to include goat ham. New Year's resolution: Stress less, work smarter not harder, and continue to create more in-house produced foods, like cheese (we now make feta, ricotta, mozzarella) and butter. Another big goal is to start our rooftop garden and keep bees. We want our own local honey."

Aaron and Monica Rocchino, owners of whole-animal butchery The Local Butcher Shop: "Looking forward to: Efficiencies in our operation, continued growth of our business, a puppy, and watching the local and sustainable food movement to continue to grow nationwide. New Year's resolution: To achieve more balance in our lives between work and play. To be better communicators of our message and our beliefs as well as not relying on telepathy to talk to one another."

Gail Morris, owner of Liba Falafel food truck: "Looking forward to: Everything. New Year's resolution: I stopped doing New Year's resolutions when I was a teenager. Life's been better ever since — it can't be a coincidence."

Charlie Hallowell, founder of Pizzaiolo and Boot and Shoe Service: "Looking forward to: In 2012 I am hoping to open another restaurant and butcher shop, to start my project 'Meat of the People,' and to teach a class at the Oxbow School with my friend Samin Nosrat! I want to organize a curriculum around literature, narrative function, and cooking. New Year's resolution: To try my best to find



Novella Carpenter

to be that only those with no passion really wanted balance, but I am suddenly craving a little. I would also love to find a way to pay every employee I have at least twenty bucks an hour. I'd love to employ more young people from Oakland. I'd love to figure out a way to employ some Oakland ex-cons. I'd love to help more people get more intimately involved with the food they buy, the food they cook, and the people with whom they are cooking."

Anya Fernald, creator of Eat Real Festival and CEO of Belcampo Meats: "Looking forward to: We're opening two stores and a slaughterhouse for our project in California, a restaurant and brewery on our farm in Uruguay, and a rum distillery and cacao and coffee processing center at our farm/hotel in Belize. I also started a nonprofit with all my partners from Eat Real Festival in 2011 — the Food Craft Institute — that's opening its doors and offering its first courses this year. New Year's resolution: To stop procrastinating, but I'm not going to start until March."

James Freeman, owner of Blue Bottle Coffee: "Looking forward to: Opening two shops in Manhattan in the early part of 2012 is what I'm most focused on, but we'll also be doubling our source trips, and tripling the amount of directly traded coffee in 2012. New Year's resolution: Leave my phone at home more often. Talk about coffee less and make coffee more. Play hooky with my family. Say

"IF 2011 WAS OUR PASTRAMI YEAR, 2012 WILL BE THE YEAR WE CHANGE HOW PEOPLE THINK OF SAUERKRAUT," SAID PETER LEVITT, CO-OWNER OF SAUL'S RESTAURANT AND DELI.

thank you."

Peter Levitt, co-owner of Saul's Restaurant and Delicatessen: "Looking forward to: If 2011 was our pastrami year, 2012 will be the year we change how people think of sauerkraut. It's a living thing that continues to gain flavor the longer it ferments; sauerkraut can be so much better than the clear pasteurized supermarket stuff. New Year's resolution: To think twice before using the word 'they.' It seems like no one's able to find middle ground and talk to each other anymore. I would like to remove the barriers between myself and my neighbors."

Russell Moore, chef at Camino: "Looking forward to: This is going to sound really dorky, but we've got a new, under-the-radar goose source that I'm really excited to try out. New Year's resolution: More surfing. I used to do it all the time, but in my three and a half years at Camino, I've only gone surfing twice. My kitchen staff thinks it would probably help my sanity if I'd go more. It resets your brain out."

Be sure to visit the *Express* website for more highlights from these and other East Bay food personalities. ●

Jesse.Hirsch@EastBayExpress.com

This column is culled from our blog of the same name.

RESTAURANTS & CAFES

West Berkeley

900 Grayson

900 Grayson St., Berkeley, 510-704-9900. The dishes have offbeat names like Lady-Boy and IV Dinner but don't let the kitschy language distract you from the other charms of this quirky upscale breakfast-and-lunch place. The cooking shines with bold seasonings and refined technique, and the service navigates crisp and casual as few restaurants can. That mix of laidback and pristine is a fitting blend for the new West Berkeley, a traditionally scrappy neighborhood recently sprouting sleek condo lofts. Still, 900 Grayson's burger, topped with chunky bacon and barbecue sauce, defies gentrification stereotypes. $$

Brennan's Restaurant

720 University Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-0960. Most of the old hofbrau-style, thoroughly un-Californian style of restaurant that crossed beer halls with cafeterias have died out. But Brennan's is still dishing up much the same food it did in 1959: turkey dinner with all the trimmings, corned beef and cabbage, barbecued brisket sandwiches. Take your tray and sit at the long communal tables, or crowd around the bar with everybody else to drink beer and watch the football game. For less than $10 a meal, you get more than you pay for. $

Cafe M

1799 Fourth St., Suite F, Berkeley, 510-526-4429. Creative renderings of classic egg dishes, pancakes, and French toast are the main event at this comfortable, kid-friendly spot on Berkeley's Fourth Street. Cafe M (the "M" is for Masarweh, as in Doyle Street Cafe co-owner George Masarweh) also serves lunch and dinner, but breakfast is its finest hour. Noteworthy options include the basic breakfast and the blueberry buckwheat pancakes, and happily there's Peet's coffee and tea to wash it all down. $$

Cafe Rouge

1782 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-525-1440. Berkeley's well-coiffed and well-to-do have taken Cafe Rouge to heart. It's a classic Californian restaurant, complete with all the trappings: organic vegetables and sustainably raised meats, a wood-fired oven, and smooth and efficient service. Chef Marsha McBride creates deceptively simple food, but imbues even her hamburgers with juicy, meaty love. Some say her roast chicken with savory bread pudding is one of the best dishes in the region. $$-$$$

Juan's Place

941 Carleton St., Berkeley, 510-845-6904. Why do *Express* readers choose Juan's as Best Mexican Restaurant year after year? Because folks go to this family-owned spot for a down-home good time. Huge parties gather at huge tables for huge food (of the refried beans and melted cheese variety). Hey, the chips are good, the wine margaritas surprisingly tasty, and the waiters, like the decor, haven't changed in years. $-$$

O Chamé

1830 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-841-8783. Simple, sublime Japanese dishes are served with robust California Mediterranean accents at this venerable Berkeley destination. The creamy, smoky tuna seabird with braised leeks is an ideal meal-opener; the ever-changing entrée menu might include delicate grilled sturgeon with a cornucopia of chard, peppers, and mushrooms or chopstick-tender skirt steak with braised spinach and earthy portobello mushrooms. A half-dozen fragrant, revivifying noodle bowls are served as well (the roasted oyster-seaweed-daikon variety is especially comforting). Get the salty-sweet caramel-balsamic gelato for dessert. Impressive boutique wine and sake list, handsome Tuscan setting. $$$

Picante

1328 Sixth St., Berkeley, 510-525-3121. Popular spot for delicious soft tacos, carne asada with grilled poblano chiles, and excellent tortilla soup. An outdoor patio gives extended families — and work parties — plenty of room to dine in the sun. $

Riva Cucina

800 Heinz Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-7482. Chef-owner Massimiliano Boldrini grew up in Emilia Romagna, the Italian region that invented pasta. Naturally, the many house-made shapes are fantastic, framed with the kind of radical simplicity that makes a dish like tubes with tomato sauce and grilled sardines taste primordial. Boldrini is fussy about his seafood — it's mostly local and consistently delicious. The semi-hidden space he's carved out feels casual for a restaurant with such serious chops, but hey, it's all part of the charm. $$-$$$

Skates on the Bay

100 Seawall Dr., Berkeley, 510-549-1900. This large, Postcard-friendly eatery in the Berkeley Marina isn't a place to visit for the food, but it's worth a try if you're looking for a unique and pleasant, if surreal dining experience. The to-die-for view, cheerful waitstaff, and great happy-hour specials could all make it worth your while. Try a flight from the extensive wine list, or sample the sublime clam chowder or chocolate cake. Just remember that if you go to celebrate your birthday, you won't be the only one. $$

Spengers Fresh Fish Grotto

1919 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-845-7771. This venerable century-old fish house, now part of the McCormick & Schmick's chain, serves up seafood from around the globe in a variety of tried and true preparations reminiscent of a bygone era. Everything is perfectly filling and nutritious, but aside from a few exceptions — the lush, spicy barbecued shrimp, for instance — it just isn't very tasty or exciting. Best bets: the perfectly crafted cocktails and the sublime desserts — try the chocolate bag filled with lemon mousse and fresh berries, for one. Undeniably impressive ambiance features several acres of vintage seafaring memorabilia. $$$

Tacubaya

1788 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-525-5160. Owned by the same folks who made Doña Tomás a success, Tacubaya brings the authentic taquería experience to yuppieville Fourth Street. Well, not quite authentic — there's no grease on the tables, and the plates are too pretty (and sometimes too pricey). The chef's subtlety is lost on the tacos and tortas, which could pack more heat. But as dishes such as pumpkin tamales with *mole rojo*, a piquant *coctel de calamares*, and feather-light *chile relleno* demonstrate, the more showy Tacubaya's food gets, the better it is. $-$$

Vik's

2390 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-644-4432. Vik's has moved two blocks south of its old location, and it still serves the best Indian *chaat* (snacks) on the planet. Two or three lunch specials — *cholle*, *raita*, *chapati* — rate as best buys, and the weekend specials are stellar. $

Westside Bakery Cafe

2570 Ninth St., Berkeley, 510-845-4852. This longtime West Berkeley café/bakery/hangout is now open for dinner with a full bar: an upscale (yet affordable) California-cuisine bill of fare, and a kitchen that often lives up to the menu's aspirations. Begin with the extra-comforting Aztec hominy-avocado soup, try the tender leg of lamb or the marvelous spicy-creamy pulled pork with polenta at combo time, and finish things off with the simple yet satisfying fruit oatmeal crisp. $$$

Zut!

1820 Fourth St., Berkeley, 510-644-0444. This handsome addition to the Fourth Street shopping scene serves imaginative regional Mediterranean dishes crafted from freshly plucked local ingredients. Chorizo-stuffed squid, smoky lamb meatballs, thin-crusted pizzas with fresh mozzarella, and side dishes of greens, lentils, beets, and polenta are among the menu's standouts; other dishes are on the overcooked side. Get the seasonal granita for dessert and one of the yummy house cocktails at the zinc-topped bar. $$$ ●

RECENTLY REVIEWED

Rumbo al Sur

4239 Park Blvd., Oakland, 510-479-1208. Rumbo al Sur is the long-anticipated pan-Latin experiment from Chef Matt Colgan of station darling À Côté. But after eleven years working in Mediterranean tapas, Colgan's foray into a new ethnic cuisine has mixed results. He is light on the spice, trying to appeal to a broad range of palates. Much of the resulting fare tends bland, though top-shelf dishes like the chiles rellenos and *pozole verde* hint at Colgan's potential. For sleepy Glenview, Rumbo al Sur is a needed shot of adrenaline. Locals pack the spot even on early weeknights, lending to a lively club-like vibe. $$

Origen

2826 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-848-9200. With "Farm to Fork Restaurant" chalked across the wall in large type, abundant bowls of squash spilling over throughout the space, and annotated produce diagrams lining the walls, Origen isn't shy about its intentions: You'll learn the exact pedigree of every ingredient in your meal, sometimes to the point of silliness. Luckily the ambitious, globally influenced menu is well-matched with the kitchen talents of Tracey Taylor and Daniel Clayton. Attempting a range of ethnic cuisines doesn't muddy the quality fare, including a highly successful wood-fired pizza program. Origen is a little off Telegraph's well-worn strip, but worth the trip. $$

Rudy's Can't Fail Cafe

2800 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-251-9400. The second outpost of Rudy's Can't Fail is a prime addition to Uptown Oakland's renaissance, adding an upbeat, family-friendly community hub to the Telegraph landscape. Food is diner-quality, another way of saying middle of the road. You can't fail with Rudy's pie, pancakes, and patty melt but avoid items that go off template (e.g., fish tacos). This location is bigger than the original in Emeryville, with a full bar, but still has the basic diner vibe down pat. Equally good for breakfast or a late-night respite from the Uptown bar parade. $$

Vitus

201 Broadway, Oakland, 510-452-1600. Vitus has the design sense of a baroque mansion and the cubic footage of an airplane hangar, with the seedy undertones of an old Vegas strip club. With live music most nights of the week, it seems an unlikely spot for dinner. Yet chef Jesse Branstetter (Chop Bar, 1015 Clay) brings years of culinary training and a roster of high-end, locally sourced ingredients to his menu of approachable pub staples. Everything is budget-priced; lucky is the late-night music lover who stumbles onto fennel-rubbed Niman pork ribs or Rocky chicken sliders for five bucks. $

Kingston 11

2original Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-214-2311. Kingston 11 pops up every weekend at Guerilla Café in the Gourmet Ghetto, with a live dancehall DJ, sangria ladled from a Home Depot bucket, and some of the best home-style Caribbean cuisine in the East Bay. Owners Adrian Henderson and Nigel Jones (as well as their large crew of family and friends) make you feel like a welcome guest at a private house party. The jerk chicken is worth a special trip, but most menu options are solid. Consider this year-old pop-up restaurant a delicious preview while the owners scope out permanent spots in Oakland. $$

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LAST CALL

TEN GREAT THINGS ABOUT GRAND TAVERN

A new favorite in Grand Lake

By Ellen Cushing

Manager Tenso Hoor pours a drink

Some bars you love for a single, specific reason — proximity to your house, comparative niceness/mixological capabilities of the bar staff, a certain drink, a friendly/attractive clientele. Better bars you love for lots and lots of specific reasons. My new obsession Grand Tavern is one such place. Without further ado, and in no particular order, they are:

1) The space! Housed in an adorable upper-Grand Avenue stucco house, this is your living room, but better: floral wallpaper, worn couches, well-chosen knickknacks, crystal (or crystal-looking) chandeliers, a candle-filled fireplace, a handsome wood bar with a veritable mountain of high-quality booze. (The owners admit they put a lot of time and energy into the setup — but even so, it doesn't feel overdesigned, just homey and warm.) There are house plants and cushy chairs and weird little nooks to sit in; if this were actually my living room I would literally never leave the house.

2) The coffee cocktail. There's no coffee in it, actually — just egg whites, brandy, ruby port, house-made simple syrup, and a nutmeg garnish, plus other unidentified deliciousness — but what the drink lacks in truth in advertising, it more than makes up for in taste: It's warm-feeling but not actually served warm, sweet but not cloying, dense but not too rich. (Also, caveat alert, a teensy bit weak for my tastes, but altogether very balanced.) Grand Tavern basically only serves so-called pre-Prohibition cocktails (that is, drinks that were created around the early 20th century and often made with painstaking technique while mercifully devoid of flavored vodka and soda pop and names ending in -tini but not starting with mar-). It's a slightly limiting choice, but one that works with the general aesthetic. The Corpse Reviver (gin, Cointreau, lemon juice, Lillet Blonde, and exactly one drop of orange bitters and five of absinthe) was also fantastic, as was the Old Cuban (sparkling wine, twelve-year rum, mint leaves, gum syrup, and lime juices, all clean, crisp, elegant, rustiness, like a less-sweet mojito). There's a lengthy and not terribly-expensive wine and beer list, but seriously guys, the coffee cocktail. Just take my word for it.

3) The off-the-beaten-path-ness of it. If Grand Tavern were in Uptown or even just a bit closer to Lakeshore, it'd be packed. But as it is — on a quiet stretch of Grand Avenue a few blocks removed from the street's main shops and restaurants — it is quiet and pleasant and not sceney or slobby or crowded in any way. There is absolutely no weird lighting, and if they play music, it must be of the benignly pleasant-and-thus-barely perceptible variety. This is a very, very good thing.

Grand Tavern
3601 Grand Ave. Oakland
510-444-4644 or
GrandTavern.net

4) The food. Grand Tavern is a real dining establishment, and a classy and critically acclaimed one at that. In a 2009 review, *Express* food critic Matthew Stafford described it as "delectable." So if you look at it one way, Grand Tavern is a nice restaurant with equally nice drinks; the other way, it's a low-key drinking establishment with extraordinary bar snacks. In either case, a cocktail and an $8 plate of duck pate is pretty hard to argue with.

5) The last time I was there, one of the waiters gave us an accidentally pulled IPA for free.

6) This is sort of a secret, but if you walk, skate, or bike there and tell your waiter, they'll take two dollars off your drink (honor system, please) — a very welcome discount with drinks scraping the apparently-now-standard $10-$12 ceiling.

7) There's wi-fi! The friend who introduced me to this place, a freelance writer, swears by Grand Tavern as something of a boozier alternative to the coffeeshop for weekday productivity. It's not hard to see why.

8) The staff. "I know this is corny, but we really are a family," explained one bartender with adorable sheepishness. He's right on both a figurative and literal level, seeing as the core of the restaurant-bar is run by a mother-daughter-son team, and the rest of the staff works with the kind of well-oiled coordination only true closeness can create. These are people who will remember you weeks after your first visit and indulge every odd question you may have — and they're also serious about supporting the community, with several monthly fundraising nights. If you're not already in love with this place, you're not paying attention.

9) Major, major bonus points for not being judgey about people coming in just to drink.

10) The ice cubes (seriously). Grand Tavern's ice cubes are practically perfect, made in a special machine called the Kold Draft, which produces magical, unusually dense, exactly-one-inch-cubic little crystals that are said to melt much slower than your standard chunk of frozen water. Superior ice is a small, silly detail, but like everything else at Grand Tavern, it's a detail that makes a difference. ●

Ellen.Cushing@EastBayExpress.com

FOOD & WINE

CULINARY & WINE

Albatross Fourth [illegible] food and events. Check website for table [illegible] special events, and VIP options. Through Jan. 26, 5-10 p.m. [illegible] 1822 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley. 510-843-2473. [illegible]

Barbecue, Brew, and Blues Ticket price covers a barbecue dinner, a glass of beer, and a blues show. Thursdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m. $25. [illegible] 2080 [illegible] Way, Berkeley. 510-225-0050. [illegible]

Classic Soup and Bread Swap three family-sized meals with a neighbor. Snacks and wine tastings provided. RSVP at least three days prior. [illegible] September meeting is on the 10th [illegible] Monday of every month, 7-8 p.m., free. Albany Community Center, 1249 Marin Ave., Albany. 510-524-9283.

Food & Market Sponsored Workshop series at the market's [illegible] tent, with weekly lessons covering topics like [illegible] food preservation. Presented by Phat Beets Produce. [illegible] Saturdays, 10-2 p.m., free. North Oakland Farmers Market, Arlington Medical Center Parking Lot, Oakland.

Monday Night Flight Night Featuring five 3-ounce pours [illegible] Guess that Beer, with a free [illegible] for matching the correct flight. Hosted by Brew and Weekly Mondays, 5 p.m. [illegible] 464 3rd St., Oakland. 510-452-2337. Beer Revolution.com.

Nothing Bundt Cake Grand Opening Celebrate the grand opening of Nothing Bundt Cake Berkeley, handcrafted [illegible] made from premium ingredients. At 1581 Bonanza Dr. Walnut Creek. Tue. Jan. 10, 5-30 p.m. [illegible]

Off the Grid A weekly food truck gathering on Shattuck Avenue at Rose Street, Berkeley. Wednesdays, 5-9 p.m.

OMFG Street-Side Lunch Curbside food, [illegible] Pizza and El Taco Bike, food trucks from the Oakland [illegible] Food Group, set up shop weekly on the corner of 4th and Washington streets in Oakland. Thursdays, 11:30 a.m. 510-910-3913. TheOMFG.org.

One Fermented Evening with Drake's Brewing Co. With a gourmet five-course meal designed to complement five Drake's beers, including a barrel-aged [illegible]. Call 510-903-3346 to RSVP. Thu., Jan. 5, 7 p.m. $40. Terrace Room at Lake Merritt Hotel, 1800 Madison St., Oakland. 510-903-3771. TheTerraceRoom.com.

Phat Beets' Crop Swap A swap of backyard eggs, produce, and other food goods. First Saturday of every month, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., free. 510-[illegible] PhatBeetsProduce.org. North Oakland Farmer's Market, Arlington Medical Center Parking Lot, Oakland.

Sushi Rolling [illegible] sushi rolling from a chef. Course includes a light dinner, a kanpai sake shot, and a sushi rolling tools gift bag. RSVP required. APinkham@Ozumo.com or 510-286-9866. Tue., Jan. 10, 6:30 p.m. $60. Ozumo Oakland, 2251 Broadway, Oakland. 510-286-9866. OzumoOakland.com.

FARMERS' MARKETS

Alameda Farmers' Market With locally grown fruits and vegetables, plus family activities. For info, visit PCFMA.com. Saturdays, 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m., free. Alameda Farmers Market, Haight Ave. at Webster St., Alameda.

Bayfair Center Farmers' [illegible] Fresh Market, supplied by local organic and specialty farmers. Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., free. Bayfair Center, 15555 E. 14th St., San Leandro. 510-357-8000. [illegible]

Children's Hospital Farmers' Market EBT and WIC okay. On the web at PhatBeetsProduce.org. Tuesdays, 2-7 p.m. Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland, 747 52nd St., Oakland.

Emeryville Farmers' Market With locally grown and produced fruit, vegetables, dairy products, flowers, wine, and more. Thursdays, 11:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Emeryville City Hall, 1333 Park Ave., Emeryville.

Farm Fresh Market Community Produce Stand Farm Fresh Choice runs [illegible] stands in culturally diverse, limited-resource neighborhoods. Wednesdays, 3-6:30 p.m., 510-848-1704. EcologyCenter.org. Frances Albier Community [illegible] San Pablo Park, 2800 Park St., Berkeley. 510-981-6150. CI.Berkeley.CA.US.

Fruitvale Farmers' Market With locally grown and produced fruit, vegetables, bread, prepared, and more. Sundays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. 510-535-6900. [illegible] Village, 3410 E. 12th St. (at Fruitvale BART), Oakland. 510-534-0900. [illegible]

Grand Lake Growers' Market Saturdays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., free. 415-472-6100. Splash Pad Park, Grand Ave. and Lake Park Ave. [illegible] 510-238-7275. OaklandNet.com/Parks/Parks/Default.asp.

Hayward City Hall Farmers' Market A farmers' market in the heart of Hayward. Saturdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Agriculture[illegible].org.

Kaiser Permanente Hayward [illegible] Market With vendors selling locally-grown California produce at the main entrance to the hospital. Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Kaiser Permanente, 27400 Hesperian Blvd., Hayward.

Kaiser Permanente Oakland Farmers' Market With vendors selling fresh organic fruits and vegetables. Fridays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Kaiser Oakland, 3600 Broadway St., Oakland.

Kensington Farmers' Market With a monthly fresh flowers, an organic chocolatier, bee products, fresh wild fish, fruits and vegetables, nuts, butters, bread, cheese, fresh pasta, and [illegible] surprises. Sundays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Berkeley. [illegible]FarmersMarket.org. Colusa Circle at the Colusa Circle, Kensington.

Laurel Market [illegible] Market Sponsored and maintained by Oakland Food Connection. With certified organic produce from [illegible] Organic Farm and a youth-led prepared food booth. Inside the Purple Lane Cafe. For more info or to find out how to become [illegible] market list at YouthFoodCommunityCulture.org, or call 510-482-1800. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Laurel [illegible] Farmers' Market, 4175 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland.

Montclair Village Farmers' Market Featuring organic produce and [illegible] foods. Free parking in Village garage at the top of La Salle Avenue. Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Downtown Montclair Village, LaSalle and Moraga Aves., Oakland.

North Berkeley Farmers' Market Breads, naturally foods, all organic [illegible] and more for sale, plus special programs and events. Thursdays, 3-7 p.m., free. Mister [illegible] 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. Shattuck Ave. at Rose St., Berkeley.

Old Oakland [illegible] Market Features super fresh seasonal produce, along with breads, [illegible] organic foods, and plenty of [illegible]. Fridays, 8 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Old Oakland Farmers' Market, 9th St. between Broadway and Clay St., Oakland. Urban-VillageOnline.com.

Pacific Coast Jack London Square Farmers' Market Seasonal produce, greens, nuts, freshly baked organic produce, cut flowers, specialty foods, yoga classes, live music, and arts and crafts for kids. Sundays, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., free. Jack London Square, 101 Broadway, Oakland.

Richmond Certified Farmers' Market Vendors sell seasonal produce, eggs, breads, and apparel. Fridays, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Richmond Farmers Market, 24th St. & Barrett Ave., Richmond.

Richmond Nevin's [illegible] Market Fresh, locally grown fruit, flowers, eggs, and other produce. Fridays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., free. Richmond Farmers Market, 24th St. & Barrett Ave., Richmond.

Saturday Berkeley Farmers' Market Fresh and organic produce, breads, specialty foods, and more for sale, plus special programs and events. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., free. 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. MLK Civic Center Park, 2151 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Berkeley. 510-981-5150. CI.Berkeley.CA.US/ContentDisplay.aspx?id=12720.

Temescal Farmers' Market California certified farmers offer seasonal produce, dried fruits and nuts, fresh ranch eggs, baked organic, locally caught fish, fresh-cut flowers, and more. Info: 510-745-7100. Sundays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m., free. DMV Parking Lot, 5300 Claremont Ave., Oakland.

Tuesday Berkeley Farmers' Market Farm and organic produce, breads, specialty foods, and more for sale, plus special programs and events. Tuesdays, 2-7 p.m., free. 510-548-3333. EcologyCenter.org. Derby St. (at Martin Luther King Jr. Way), Berkeley. ●

Submissions for calendar listings should be e-mailed to Calendar@EastBayExpress.com or mailed to Calendar Editor, East Bay Express, 620 3rd St., Oakland, CA, 94607. Deadline is 14 days prior to the event date.

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PICK

Sushi-Rolling Class

Asked [illegible] make kappa maki, kanpyo maki, natto maki, shiitake maki, or tekka maki — or maybe a quick California roll — would you be up to the task, or in over your head? Make 2012 your year-mastery year. Ozumo (2251 Broadway, Oakland) offers a sushi rolling class on Tuesday Jan. 10. Participants receive hands-on instruction from a professional sushi chef along with a light dinner, kanpai sake shots, and a gift bag containing sushi-rolling tools. 6:30 p.m., $60. Reservations required: email APinkham@Ozumo.com or call 510-286-9866. Ozumo.com/Oakland — *Anneli Rufus*

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HOOVES OF GLORY

A horse is a horse, of course, of course (*War Horse*). Unless he's a political dark horse (*The Conquest*).

By Kelly Vance

Jeremy Irvine stars as Albert in War Horse.

War Horse has been on local screens for about two weeks, but because of the usual holiday new-release traffic jam we're just getting around to it now. So here are a few late notes on the second — and lesser — of the season's two Steven Spielberg-directed movies. Why do we care about it? Because it's Spielberg.

Diary entry: It builds slowly, starting with a few snickers in the film's second half and then rising to a dull crescendo amongst the auditorium full of critics in a downtown San Francisco multiplex. Groans, snorts of derision, self-conscious guffaws. Reviewers are here for a preview screening of *War Horse* with no free "professional contestants" allowed, only working press and invited guests. The natives are sharpening their knives.

The thing that really sets them off is the last scene, the one in which young soldier Albert Narracott (played by Jeremy Irvine) returns home from France to his parents' farm after World War I, accompanied by his long-lost four-legged best friend, Joey. Joey has been through hell but Albert has no way of knowing that. The only thing that matters is that Mum and Dad (Emily Watson and Peter Mullan) have finally got their son and his "Miracle Horse" back.

Spielberg obviously went to great pains to stage this reunion in full 1939 MGM style, from the artificial-looking farmyard to the *Gone with the Wind* red sky. The film climaxes in a sort of group grope slathered with whipped-creamy John Williams string music. We keep expecting to see the juvenile Elizabeth Taylor and Mickey Rooney pop their heads into frame. Hoots burst from the corners of the room and the most vocal audience members depart, leaving everyone else to quietly ponder the broad avenues and secret byways of Spielberg's sensibility.

A little corn every once in a while can be a good thing. Spielberg and screenwriters Lee Hall and Richard Curtis (adapting Michael Morpurgo's novel of the same name) approach the boy-and-horse scenario straight-on, as a young person's adventure yarn with all the trimmings. And for three-quarters of the movie it rouses what we consider to be our purest adolescent instincts without stepping in too much horseshit. Hard-working Devon farm lad Albert recognizes Joey for the brave, stout-hearted thoroughbred he is, even though old Ted — why is Mullan always cast as a drunk? — obviously paid too much for a plow horse. Mum is so sweet she makes Jane Darwell seem like the Wicked Witch of the West. The lighting and scenery are unnatural, with intentionally stagey-looking CGI. Meanwhile, there's the insulting landlord Mr. Lyons (well cast David Thewlis) waiting in the wings for his rent.

We can't help wishing Ken Loach had made this movie. But then we'd miss out on the sorrow-drenched Spielbergian spectacle: limbs flying in the air after an artillery round hits the British trench a few yards down; the groan-inducing shot in which the windmill blade obscures the execution (for desertion) of Gunther and Michael, Albert's German counterparts (David Kross and Leonard Carow); the sight of weary Joey pulling a big gun up a muddy hill; the nice old Belgian jam and jelly maker (Niels Arestrup) and his granddaughter Emilie (Celine Buckens) getting their horse ransacked by Huns, etc.

If Spielberg can't show absolutely everything, his mission is incomplete. Joey makes the arduous wartime rounds from master to temporary master. We begin to wish that Robert Bresson had made this film so that Joey could actually earn a little of the pathos the filmmaker heaps on his back. The saintly donkey in *Au Hasard Balthazar* went straight to movie-animal heaven without half the *sturm und drang*. Poor Joey always seems to be overacting, even though the best scenes in the film — including the stunning "cavalry charge" and "no man's land" sequences — have more to do with directorial bravado and special effects than with equine heroism.

Of course, Loach and Bresson never had to contend with the expectations Spielberg faces every time he attaches his name to a project. *War Horse* will never make anyone forget about *Kes* or *Balthazar*, let alone *All Quiet on the Western Front* or *Paths of Glory* or *The Big Parade* or *Sergeant York* or *Joyeux Noël* or Charlie Chaplin's *Shoulder Arms*, but none of those films was made to compete in the marketplace Spielberg finds himself the king of. As before, his exalted middle-class American consumerism runs into trouble overseas and instinctively reaches for "classical Hollywood" motifs. But the magic talismans lose their potency. Too much is never enough.

How much do we need to know about Nicolas Sarkozy? That's the question we have to be asking ourselves with *The Conquest*, filmmaker/playwright Xavier Durringer's docudrama about the *prise de pouvoir* of the current French president. If you're still reading this review, you're probably interested enough to be told that it's too concerned with political intrigue to function as a general-interest drama, yet a bit too soapy to work as a behind-the-scenes policy exposé. Maybe a documentary would have done the job better.

As portrayed by Denis Podalydès — a popular French actor mostly unseen in the US except in small parts in such films as *Caché* or *The Da Vinci Code* — Sarko is the ultimate self-made man, a willful party functionary in France's conservative Union for a Popular Movement who bides his time, dodging back stabs by his "allies" Jacques Chirac and Dominique de Villepin as he jockeys for position on the national stage. His greatest asset, and also his biggest challenge, is his wife Cécilia Sarkozy (Florence Pernel), who leaves Sarko for another man but returns to his side "just for the election."

Podalydès does a decent job impersonating the man his rivals called "the midget," but the haughty patricians Chirac (Bernard Le Coq) and Villepin (Samuel Labarthe) steal the movie away from him every time they sneer at his populism. Maybe if Sarkozy dusted off an old guillotine and staged his own counter-revolution, but no — wrong group of people. M. le Président is a spiritual ally of George W. Bush and Barack Obama, an opportunist who adores sweets and chic women, not one to upset the status quo unnecessarily. He'd rather get tough with underclass rioting youths than with fellow pols. The only conquest this movie achieves is the victory over insomnia. ●

Editor@EastBayExpress.com

War Horse
Directed by Steven Spielberg. With Jeremy Irvine and Peter Mullan. Now playing.

The Conquest
Directed by Xavier Durringer. With Denis Podalydès and Florence Pernel. Opens Friday.

MOVIES & THEATERS

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OPENING

The Conquest How much do we really need to know about the political career of French president Nicolas Sarkozy? That's the question we ask ourselves as filmmaker Xavier Durringer's straightforward historical drama plays out, with actor Denis Podalydès as the less-than-charming conservative [illegible] who willed his way to France's top job despite the [illegible] of rivals in his own party. The film is too [illegible] with political intrigue to function as much of a general-interest story, yet a bit too soapy — Sarko's on-again off-again wife Cécilia (Florence Pernel) is seen [illegible] — to work as a behind-the-scenes policy exposé. Maybe a documentary would have done the job better. Screenplay adaptation by Xavier Durringer, with dialogue by Patrick Rotman. (105 min.) (K.V.)

The Devil Inside Documentary-style horror film [illegible] a young woman on a quest to find the true story behind her mother's [illegible] things an exorcism. Directed by William Brent Bell, written by Bell and Matthew Peterman, starring Fernanda Andrade, Simon Quarterman, and Evan Helmuth.

ONGOING

The Adventures of Tintin 3D Steven Spielberg and Hergé [illegible] comic-book [illegible] Spielberg, in a nutshell. If he's smart, the director will never, ever attempt a sequel to this [illegible]. Screenplay adaptation by Steven Moffat, Edgar Wright, and Joe Cornish. Also with the voices of Daniel Craig, Simon Pegg, Cary Elwes, Toby Jones, Nick Frost, and Gad Elmaleh. (107 min.) (K.V.)

Alvin and the Chipmunks: Chipwrecked In the third feature film [illegible] of the wildly popular [illegible] America's favorite squeaky-voiced [illegible] find themselves stranded on a tropical island. Directed by Mike Mitchell, written by Jonathan Aibel and Glenn Berger. Starring Jason Lee, David Cross, and the voices of Justin Long, Christina Applegate, Anna Faris, and Amy Poehler. (87 min.)

Arthur Christmas Animated holiday family movie centering around Santa Claus' son, as he [illegible] prepare for Christmas night. Directed by Sarah Smith, written by Smith and Peter Baynham, starring the voices of James McAvoy, Hugh Laurie, and Bill Nighy. (97 min.)

The Artist Irresistible but rare. The French team of actor Jean Dujardin and writer-director Michel Hazanavicius (the OSS 117 spy spoof series) stage a time-machine ride back to 1920s Hollywood for the story of a vain silent-movie star (Dujardin) whose career fades with the coming of talkies. Meanwhile, the girlfriend (pretty Bérénice Bejo), a walk-on extra, becomes a star [illegible]

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herself. The gimmick is that the actors [illegible] all of them [illegible] supporting players John Goodman and James Cromwell [illegible] until the movie's final scene. It's just as well, since Dujardin apparently doesn't speak English. [illegible] in the scenario's nod toward to *Sunset Boulevard*, *A Star Is Born*, and *Singin' in the Rain*, there's nothing much original as long as except Dujardin's signature mugging. (100 min.) (K.V.)

A Dangerous Method We expected something of a [illegible] when director David Cronenberg — with help from screenwriter Christopher Hampton, adapting his own play as well as John Kerr's book — [illegible] meeting of the minds between the fathers of psychoanalysis, Carl Gustav Jung (played by Michael Fassbender) and Sigmund Freud (Viggo Mortensen) circa 1904 through 1913. We also expected Cronenberg's fascination with [illegible] to figure in, as it does when Jung [illegible] with his patient, a hysterical [illegible] named Sabina Spielrein (Keira Knightley, [illegible]). What we didn't expect was that [illegible] the [illegible] of [illegible] is hard to spot, even though the two [illegible] and the [illegible] practitioner provide him with plenty of [illegible] opportunities. [illegible] in the good [illegible] days. When [illegible] Jung [illegible] you in the theater — that's exactly how [illegible] there are in the audience. (99 min.) (K.V.)

The Darkest Hour [illegible] young people — played by Emile Hirsch, Max Minghella, and Olivia Thirlby, among others — who are attempting to fight off an alien invasion in contemporary Moscow. Directed by Chris Gorak and written by Jon Spaihts, Leslie Bohem, and M.T. Ahern. (89 min.)

The Descendants A [illegible] triumph for both director Alexander Payne and actor George Clooney, who plays a well-off Honolulu [illegible] with big financial decisions to make. After an accident, his wife is in a coma. The emotional and ethical progress of "back-up parent" Matt King (Clooney) and his daughters is of a piece with the humane, funny, [illegible] portraits of similarly [illegible] in *Sideways*, *About Schmidt*, and the rest of the Payne filmography. Like Preston Sturges, Payne is as infatuated with individual Americans as he is with the idea of being an American — here extending to take in Matt's native Hawaiian family background. Clooney turns in one of his finest performances, maybe his best to date, with terrific support by Shailene Woodley and Amara Miller as the daughters. The wall-to-wall traditional Hawaiian music is also perfect. Screenplay by Payne, Nat Faxon, and Jim Rash, adapted from a novel by Kaui Hart Hemmings. Fine support acting by [illegible], Beau Bridges, Matthew Lillard, and Robert Forster. Refreshing and invigorating as an island breeze. (115 min.) (K.V.)

Don 2 Hindi-language [illegible] a gangster seeking European domination after escaping prison in Asia. Directed by Farhan Akhtar, written by Farhan Akhtar, [illegible] Akhtar, and [illegible]; starring Shah Rukh Khan and Priyanka Chopra.

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo Nothing terribly wrong with David Fincher's English-language remake of the first episode of the Stieg Larsson-penned Swedish trilogy about female avenger Lisbeth Salander and her war on men who hate women. Director Fincher spends his [illegible] budget wisely, with welcome overtones of *Zodiac*, and both Rooney Mara (as tech-savvy Lisbeth) and Daniel Craig (as the [illegible] reporter Mikael Blomkvist) handle themselves well. But we wonder [illegible] why the film was necessary, other than to capture the [illegible] market in the US. Fine support by Christopher Plummer, Stellan Skarsgård, Yorick van Wageningen, and Joely Richardson as members of a [illegible] industrialist family. A well made, sturdy curiosity. (158 min.) (K.V.)

Happy Feet Two This sequel to the animated kids' movie *Happy Feet* follows the further adventures of a family of dancing penguins. Directed by George Miller; written by Miller, Gary Eck, Warren Coleman, and Paul Livingston, featuring the voices of Elijah Wood, Robin Williams, and Pink. (105 min.)

Hugo Martin Scorsese children's movie, with [illegible] that implies. The famed [illegible] doesn't have much of a use for the lead character, an orphaned teenage boy who lives in the walls of a 1930s-era Paris train station, maintaining the station's clocks. Scorsese's main interest is young Hugo's (Asa Butterfield) relation to Papa Georges (Ben Kingsley), a grumpy shopkeeper who just might be the great early film fantasy [illegible] Georges Méliès, living out his life in obscurity. So Hugo isn't very much his film. It's [illegible] for cinema fanatics like Scorsese, and he [illegible] plenty [illegible] with [illegible] clips from Méliès' short masterpieces, plus his own gorgeously rendered 3D [illegible] of a film-lover's Paris. Chloë Grace Moretz [illegible] as Hugo's [illegible] interest, with nice character [illegible] by the mostly British cast: Emily Mortimer, Christopher Lee, and Sacha Baron Cohen as the comically menacing [illegible]. Screenplay by John Logan adapted from the book by Brian Selznick. (127 min.) (K.V.)

J. Edgar Clint Eastwood's biographical study of FBI honcho J. Edgar Hoover (broadly portrayed warts and all by Leonardo DiCaprio) is a [illegible] ill-conceived production, the sort of movie that [illegible] you and [illegible] on you [illegible] leave the [illegible]. As written for the screen by Dustin Lance Black (Oscar winner for his *Milk* screenplay), Hoover was simultaneously one of the most powerful men in the US, the nation's [illegible] — and also a [illegible] mama's boy, [illegible] of "Reds," [illegible] pretenders, and African-American civil rights [illegible] like Martin Luther King Jr. [illegible] may or may not have been in a [illegible] relationship with his chief lieutenant, FBI agent Clyde Tolson (Armie Hammer). But aside from the smothering influence of Hoover's mother (Judi Dench), we learn almost nothing about him [illegible] his prejudices were [illegible] almost at all, even with a [illegible] with producer-director Eastwood [illegible] does this [illegible] profile fit into his filmography? Raises many more questions than it answers. Co-starring Naomi Watts as the woman the young Hoover [illegible] up to. (137 min.) (K.V.)

Melancholia Lars von Trier's filmography has been a bumpy and [illegible] pretentious, [illegible] But this [illegible] about [illegible] one of the world [illegible] family [illegible] his masterpiece. Conceived in the midst of the writer-director's bout with depression [illegible] what [illegible] young [illegible] almost [illegible] (Kirsten Dunst in a career-defining performance), her husband (Alexander Skarsgård), her sister (Charlotte Gainsbourg) and the sister's husband (Kiefer Sutherland) while they wait in a secluded villa for an approaching planet, Melancholia, to collide with Earth. It's [illegible] hallucination in the key of "von Trier mirror" with some of most gorgeous visuals of the filmmaker's career [illegible] Wagnerian [illegible] doom. Nothing von Trier has made before approaches the gravity of this. (135 min.) (K.V.)

Midnight in Paris Owen Wilson's Woody Allen imitation [illegible] up well with one of Allen's [illegible] scenarios in this charming [illegible] a dissatisfied Hollywood screenwriter (Wilson) on vacation in the city with his [illegible] wife (Rachel McAdams) and her awful [illegible], who magically escapes into a [illegible] of 1920s "Lost Generation" Paris. Has the same nostalgia-drenched [illegible] as *Paris Je T'Aime* and also [illegible] to decorate the postcard valentine with nice performances by Marion Cotillard (as the Picasso character's [illegible] girlfriend), Kathy Bates (Gertrude Stein), and Adrien Brody [illegible] as Salvador Dalí. (94 min.) (K.V.)

Mission: Impossible — Ghost Protocol For the fourth installment in the mega-lucrative Mission Impossible film series, Tom Cruise reprises his role as [illegible] spy Ethan Hunt, this time [illegible] with rebuilding his spy organization's reputation after it's framed for an act of terrorism. Directed by Brad Bird, written by Josh Appelbaum and André Nemec; also starring Simon Pegg and Jeremy Renner. (133 min.)

The Muppets Kermit, Miss Piggy, Fozzie, Gonzo, the Swedish Chef, Beaker and the rest of the original Jim Henson [illegible] of wise-cracking,

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furry [illegible] who is from a long [illegible] to get out of it [illegible] rescue the Muppets theater from the control of a greedy oil tycoon (Chris Cooper). Little kids as well as anyone who was raised in the Eighties will be suitably wowed. From all appearances they're traditional-style puppets, not CGI, and the new songs by Bret McKenzie give them plenty to do. Anchoring the human side of the story are Amy Adams (parodying her own sweetness) and *Forgetting Sarah Marshall* guy Jason Segel, the main [illegible]. Multi additional cameos by everyone from Mickey Rooney to Ken "Mr. Chow" Jeong. Directed smartly by James Bobin. There's [illegible] in the theaters: Pixar's *Small Fry* [illegible] [illegible] (102 min.) (K.V.)

My Week With Marilyn [illegible] marks [illegible] the behind-the-scenes drama [illegible] of Marilyn Monroe (Michelle Williams) being [illegible] by Laurence Olivier (Kenneth Branagh) in the movie *The Prince and the Showgirl* circa 1956 — as seen through the eyes of a starstruck young assistant director named Colin Clark (Eddie Redmayne). Williams is genuinely good as vulnerable Marilyn and Branagh is too, as the imperious Olivier, although they work together [illegible] If we can suspend our [illegible] Branagh is the chubby and unglamorous [illegible] to play Olivier [illegible] Adrian Hodges' screenplay, based on Clark's tell-all memoir, [illegible] (known as *Me and Orson Welles*). In the large supporting cast are Julia Ormond as Vivien Leigh (huh?), Zoë Wanamaker as Marilyn's acting teacher and Dougray Scott as MM's playwright husband, Arthur "She's devouring me" Miller. Directed dutifully by Simon Curtis. Typical Weinstein Co. trifle bait. (99 min.) (K.V.)

New Year's Eve Director Garry Marshall and screenwriter Katherine Fugate strain in the [illegible] style of their [illegible] hit *Valentine's Day* [illegible] another demographically chosen [illegible] of stars through a half-dozen story lines that all take place on the title day. No one [illegible] with Marshall's movies (*Pretty Woman*, *The Princess Diaries*) will come to this expecting Lubitsch, but even with the bar lowered, this [illegible] seems appallingly bad. A lazy assortment of weak punch lines, sentimental treacle [illegible] and situations (Robert De Niro as a terminally ill man yearning for his estranged daughter, Ashton Kutcher and Lea Michele as antagonists stuck in an elevator, etc.). The sole bright spot: Seth Meyers and Jessica Biel as a husband and wife who hope to deliver their baby immediately after midnight so they can claim a $25,000 prize. Meyers, the head writer of *Saturday Night Live*, [illegible] threw out Fugate's script pages and [illegible] over, which makes you wish everyone went to the [illegible] and done the same. (118 min.) (J.J.)

Shame [illegible] Fassbender (*A Dangerous Method*, *X-Men: First Class*) gets put through an [illegible] by [illegible] Steve McQueen. The gist of it is that Fassbender's nervous Manhattan sex addict Brandon [illegible] eloquently [illegible] and even the implied [illegible] with his sister [illegible] Carey Mulligan. But you might have guessed that. He's leading a Empty, Meaningless Existence and hates every minute of it, just like the protagonist of every [illegible] lazy social-problem movie. For what it's worth, there's nothing wrong with Fassbender's performance, but there's everything the matter with co-writer (with Abi Morgan) McQueen's [illegible] (99 min.) (K.V.)

Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows Holmes (Robert Downey Jr., never better) and his loyal companion Dr. Watson (Jude Law) along for the [illegible] journey from [illegible] to France, Germany, and Switzerland on the trail of evil genius Professor Moriarty (Jared Harris) and his henchmen, who are trying to [illegible] World War twenty years too early. The change of scenery fixes them good. Otherwise, same Victorian clutter, same overstuffed frames, same Guy Ritchie [illegible] hyperactivity, but a [illegible] addition: Noomi Rapace (of the Swedish *Dragon Tattoo* version) as a [illegible], plus the agreeable [illegible] Stephen Fry as Mycroft Holmes, the bulkier brother. Bones production design by Sarah Greenwood. The screenplay is by the husband-wife team of Kieran and Michele Mulroney. (129 min.) (K.V.)

The Sitter Black comedy starring Jonah Hill as a [illegible] college student who [illegible] babysits [illegible]. Directed by David Gordon Green, written by Brian Gatewood and Alessandro Tanaka, also starring Ari Graynor and Max Records.

Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy All the ingredients come together in a [illegible] adaptation of the John le Carré Cold War spy novel about the search for a Soviet mole inside the British secret service circa 1973. At the top of the list is [illegible] Gary Oldman's [illegible] underplaying as quiet, [illegible] ever-observant intelligence guru George Smiley — this after years of Oldman's overdoing it as [illegible] Sid Vicious, Lee Harvey Oswald and the rest. He is backed up by a dream cast of English players: Colin Firth, John Hurt, Benedict Cumberbatch, Tom Hardy, Toby Jones, Kathy Burke, Ciarán Hinds. [illegible] and dependable villain Mark Strong in a change of pace as a [illegible] spook. The screenplay adaptation, by Peter Straughan and the late Bridget O'Connor, is likewise a [illegible] of efficiency. Prop it up with Swedish director Tomas Alfredson's (*Let the Right One In*) [illegible] color-coded staging, and it's one of the most intelligent espionage dramas since [illegible] le Carré's own *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*. Also thrilling: Alberto Iglesias' music score. By the way, don't look for periods [illegible] the main energy [illegible] here [illegible] (127 min.) (K.V.)

Tower Heist Something from the comical corner of the "Occupation Society" [illegible] a [illegible] to extract justice from a Bernie Madoff-style Wall Street [illegible] (Alan Alda). [illegible] employees of the New York City tower where the [illegible] lives, Ben Stiller, Casey Affleck, Gabourey Sidibe (of *Precious*), Michael Peña [illegible] join forces with a [illegible] (Eddie Murphy) [illegible] break the rich [illegible] It's got [illegible] Matthew Broderick shows up as a pathetic laid-off financial [illegible] and a [illegible] for one or two genuine laughs. Directed routinely by [illegible] Ratner, co-starring Téa Leoni and Judd Hirsch. (104 min.) (K.V.)

The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn Part 1 Third installment of the wildly popular Young Adult vampire series. Directed by Bill Condon, adapted by Melissa Rosenberg from the novel of the same name by Stephenie Meyer. Starring Kristen Stewart, Robert Pattinson, and Taylor Lautner. (117 min.)

War Horse See this week's review (146 min.) (K.V.)

We Bought a Zoo A wretchedly cloying script by Aline Brosh McKenna [illegible] 27 *Dresses*) gets an impressive makeover from director Cameron Crowe (*Almost Famous*, *Jerry Maguire*). On paper, the goal is enough to make you puke: a wealthy writer (Matt Damon) grieving after the death of his [illegible] wife, moves his [illegible] daughter and petulant teenage son into a decrepit, small-town zoological park, where their broken family is [illegible] (Scarlett Johansson). The [illegible] Crowe's [illegible] and [illegible] oddball character [illegible] Patrick Fugit, Angus Macfadyen [illegible] Johansson, surprisingly [illegible] this seems to be the [illegible] she's [illegible] in years [illegible] McKenna [illegible] a [illegible] by British writer Benjamin Mee, with Thomas Haden Church, Elle Fanning, as [illegible] (124 min.) (J.J.)

Young Adult It's hard to [illegible] *Young Adult* from the expectations that surround it — from what we're expecting of the actors and what they seem to expect of the audience. Written by Diablo Cody and directed by Jason Reitman, a writer and director who collectively have some smart, fun work on their résumés, *Young Adult* stars Charlize Theron as an it's-okay-you're-[illegible] [illegible] Mavis, a small-town [illegible] high-school boyfriend who she sets out to seduce, and Patton Oswalt as the former [illegible] (permanently crippled by a savage [illegible] he walks with a cane.) And while it does have a few inspired moments, they're just that — two-to-four-minute periods of insight and humor, showing the [illegible] of what these people think they've made if they hadn't taken a few [illegible] wrong turns. The whole [illegible] so [illegible] that it's difficult to just sit and [illegible] the thing without interrupting it to ponder "Shhh, maybe they sort of [illegible] this?" and "Do you think they [illegible] me to feel that?" We [illegible] Patton Oswalt's Matt to teach Mavis how to connect with another person or engage with the world in some authentic way, but [illegible] never happens, and the small [illegible] who are [illegible] don't give us anything to [illegible] or sympathize with, either. Obviously, [illegible] be worth watching without [illegible] we love [illegible] But [illegible] there's [illegible] where the [illegible] should be. They [illegible] another [illegible] of dollars and just forgot to say well, pretty much anything. (94 min.) (A.M.)

ONE-NIGHT STANDS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10

Collaborators (120 min., 2011) [illegible] Theatre Live (Shattuck Cinemas Elmwood, Berkeley, 7:30)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11

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California [illegible] Kittredge Street near Shattuck, Berkeley

THE ARTIST (PG-13)
[illegible]

YOUNG ADULT (R)
[illegible]

THE DESCENDANTS (R)
[illegible]

PIEDMONT [illegible] Piedmont Ave. at 40th, Oakland

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[illegible] (PG-13)
[illegible]

[illegible] (PG)
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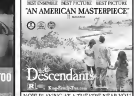

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MUSIC

CHURCHES FIND SALVATION

Frontman Caleb Nichols wants to sanctify teen angst.

By Rachel Swan

Even a cursory listen to the Oakland guitar-drum duo Churches is enough to get a thumbnail sketch of frontman Caleb Nichols as a frustrated, artsy, poetically depressed gay teenager growing up in Los Osos, California. Well, that's the idea, at least.

"Picture me," Nichols said, leaning forward in his swivel chair the way someone might bend over a lectern for emphasis. "I'm somewhat like Robert Smith in my hairstyle and my nail polish. I'm in my bedroom of the shitty house we lived in back then, in Nowheresville. And I'm looking in the mirror and Smashing Pumpkins' "Zero" is playing really loud and my mom's probably knocking on the door telling me to stop that. And I'm pushing a safety pin through my ear." Nichols raised a barely discernible eyebrow above the rims of his glasses while relating this particularly unappetizing detail.

"Stop with the angst already!" snapped his bandmate Pat Spurgeon, swatting the air in mock annoyance. Nichols smiled mischievously. Not only is teenage agony one of his favorite topics of conversation, it's also his favorite muse. He structured Churches largely around the idea of conveying restive energy in garage-rock form: all melodic riffs and heavy backbeats and yowling vocals to shape lyrics that he notes are largely autobiographical. The duo form is brilliant for that, both bandmembers say, because it's small enough and loose enough to accommodate a vast welter of emotions. "It's sort of like a commando mission — there are just two of you," Spurgeon said.

Nichols nodded, and offered his own analogy: "It's like Facebook versus MySpace. It's just cleaner."

In truth, Spurgeon and Nichols initially tried to collaborate in that format a long time ago, well before guitar-drum antics became commonplace in indie rock. They first toured together in 2007, when Spurgeon was drumming for the indie pop group Rogue Wave and Nichols was playing bass in the similarly styled, but folkier outfit Port O'Brien. The two clicked right away and quickly hatched plans to form a band together, but it didn't quite work out. Rogue Wave had started to take off, so Spurgeon was out touring all the time and couldn't realistically take part in conceiving a new band. So Nichols formed a new four-piece called Grand Lake on his own, with then roommate Ryan Christopher Parks on drums and Jameson Swanagon on guitar. For four years the two musicians led separate, parallel careers and remained amicable. It wasn't until this past November that both finally put their respective projects on hiatus to launch Churches.

Pat Spurgeon and Caleb Nichols of Churches.

The impetus also came partly from former Port O'Brien singer Van Pierszalowski, who helped Nichols refine the idea and offered to produce Churches' first album. Pierszalowski now fronts a different indie band, Waters, and he enlisted Nichols to play bass for several summer tours. Nichols said that most of the conceptualizing — from the name to the pared-down format and the overall sensibility — happened during those long car rides. Originally, he was going to launch Churches as a solo project, mostly to release a huge cache of songs he'd written during high school and early adulthood. (He's 29 now.) He planned to hire Spurgeon as a session drummer, handle all the melodic parts himself, and make it the indie rock equivalent of a memoir. But that idea changed once he and Spurgeon were in the studio together. Their musical rapport was hard to overlook.

"I think the danger that you might get into if you're a two-piece band, is playing too much," Spurgeon said. "I want to keep it very bonehead, very simple."

"Which is very teenage," Nichols conceded.

Appropriately, the two of them look a bit like overgrown teenagers. Nichols wears flannel shirts and big Coke bottle glasses. Spurgeon is tall and rangy, with a handlebar mustache and a thick puff of curly hair. Both of them fidget constantly, as if to expel all the bottled-up adrenaline that they never quite exorcised as teenagers. Hanging out in their West Oakland studio last Wednesday night, the two musicians seemed to be constantly in motion. Nichols twirled from side to side in his swivel chair. Spurgeon flitted from his computer to his chair to the adjacent room, grabbed a corduroy jacket and swaddled himself in it, picked up a banjo and began tuning it. He appeared to focus better with part of his attention diverted.

Much of their excitement could have generated from an earlier recording session, during which they cut several tracks for a forthcoming debut album. But some of it is just the way they move through the world, and it's integral to the aesthetic of Churches, Nichols said. He maintains that rock can be forlorn and sensitive while retaining loutish, aggressive, upbeat, and urgent energy. "I think there's no angst in pop culture, and I'd love to change that — because there's plenty to be angsty about," he explained. "Everyone's walking around like everything's a-okay, everyone watches *Glee* and listens to dance music. I don't know, man, there's some wild, dark stuff just beneath the surface."

Spurgeon concurred, adding that he sees evidence of that collectively escapist attitude in his side gig as a club DJ (at local bars like The Layover and Mission Lounge). "When people ask for dance music I almost want to reach down their throats and pull them inside out."

"I just think there's something more urgent that needs to be in music than just shaking your ass," Nichols said.

That's exactly what he's trying to convey in Churches, particularly with the songs he wrote in high school. Take "Lethargy," which Nichols describes as "the saddest love song of small town gayness" that ever existed. In other words, it's about coming of age — and eventually coming out — in a town of sixteen thousand people that pretty much consists of a grocery store, a Rite Aid, a couple youth centers (where Nichols launched his career as a rock star), and a checkerboard of boxy, identical homes. Or take "Big Soul," which is actually animated and bouncy even though it's about unrequited love and sexual frustration. Or take the band's newly minted single "Save Me," which relies on a warm major-key melody to shore up the sentiment of lyrics that are really about desperation and longing.

Show Details

At The Uptown (1928 Telegraph Ave., Oakland) on Friday, Jan. 6, 9 p.m. [illegible] UptownNightclub.com

"Churches stylistically is really coming from that era of my life," Nichols said, pointing out that the religious references aren't entirely ironic — he really did feel a strong desire to be "saved" as a teenager, even if he found salvation in Smashing Pumpkins and The Pixies rather than in Christianity. (Also, his middle name, "Kirke," is German for "church.") And while that period might have been painful, he and Spurgeon do everything they can to preserve it. They still dress in the early Nineties grunge style that was popular during their high school years. They still orient their lives around rock music. And for that matter, they still love the same bands — Nichols keeps Smashing Pumpkins' "Today" as his cell phone ring tone. Such things might make Churches seem hopelessly nostalgic or self-referential. But Nichols knows his ideal audience. "I definitely have in mind making the kind of record I would have really have liked to listen to when I was sixteen." ●

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PUNK ROCK CABARET

For years, DJ Lebowitz has regaled audiences with punk rock hits in stride form.

By Rachel Swan

It should be obvious that an artist with a stage name as cumbersome as "DJ Lebowitz" is really no DJ at all, but a cabaret pianist. Granted, the actual DJ Lebowitz might take umbrage at that characterization. So don't tell him I made it.

Lebowitz, whose full name is David Jan Lebowitz, is a classically trained instrumentalist who grew up in Berkshire Hills, Massachusetts, and speaks with the slightest trace of an East Coast accent — which he may have acquired here for all we know. He took piano lessons as a kid and learned all the basics — "you know, piano, forte, crescendo, staccato," he says, proudly — and good enough technique to play any Scott Joplin rag, which any trained pianist knows is no easy feat. He's been a full-time musician forever, which also isn't plain sailing, particularly for a guy who doesn't sing, doesn't teach, doesn't brandish any conservatory credentials, and generally eschews social networking beyond his MySpace page. "I think Facebook is really creepy," he wrote in the postscript to an email.

Yet Lebowitz realized, decades ago, that he could eke out a living playing bar piano if he learned a full repertoire of rock music. Initially he focused on mainstream ear-wormy songs that he could learn off the radio or from his own record collection. "But then I said to myself, 'I gotta be doing the punk stuff — now that's where it's at.'" His first foray into punk was "Babylon" by The New York Dolls. From there he added hits (or rarities) by The Sex Pistols, Gang Green, Four, Black Flag, Depeche Mode, The Damned — you name it. He researched these musicians so extensively that he could give you the entire synopsis of any punk rocker's career, without relying on Wikipedia.

And once he'd done all that, he began hiring himself out for weddings, bar and restaurant happy hours, mall food courts, and, on occasion, stage venues. To date, he's opened for The Butthole Surfers, The Dead Milkmen, The Buzzcocks, Gwar, and Three Day Stubble — which he lauds as "the world's foremost nerd wave band." He even cut an album, appropriately titled *Beware of the Piano*. In certain circles, he's a veritable rock star.

Show Details

DJ Lebowitz plays every Thursday at Disco Volante (347 14th St., Oakland). 5:16 p.m., free. DiscoVolanteOakland.com

Around here, though, he's mostly known as a human juke box. He holds down weekly gigs at Madrone Art Bar and 83 Proof in San Francisco, plus Disco Volante in Oakland — where he holds court every Thursday from 5:16 p.m. until about 7:15. He was there last Thursday, wearing a coral punk shirt and brown corduroy slacks, laying his song request sheets — which are either typed or handwritten and photocopied — atop the bar in neat little stacks. He also had a small stack of index cards and a flier with a cartoon depiction of his head — eyebrows raised, eyes like two fried eggs, big rictus plastered over his jaw — fixed over the piano. The drawing is pretty accurate, Lebowitz said, except it used to include a pair of glasses that he since eliminated after taking a "natural vision" course. "So I erased them and drew in the eyes," he said, squinting.

DJ Lebowitz Rachel Swan

Watching Lebowitz among the mostly chic clientele at Disco Volante, it's easy to get the impression he might have walked in from the wrong movie set, with his rumpled pink shirt and stack of papers and neatly typed index cards he uses to "memorize" the songs he actually knows by rote. But he's a fixture at the bar, having played there eleven months straight. The pianist says he was "discovered" at 83 Proof by a friend of co-owner Damon Gallagher, and that he landed the gig shortly thereafter. The customers and wait staff all cottoned to him pretty easily, and he enjoys chatting them up on his breaks. "This guy's awesome, he's the shit," a bartender said, pointing at Lebowitz as the pianist listed forward on a bar stool, rifling through his song lists and checking his watch to see if it was already 5:16.

Lebowitz looked up and blinked. "Miguel, I can't be the shit 'because I smell great,'" he retorted. Miguel smiled obligingly and offered himself for a fist bump.

It was 5:30 by the time Lebowitz got to the piano that day, and he spent several minutes dusting the lid off with his fingers before opening it to wipe off the keys. He raised the lid of the piano bench, pulled out two phone books, and stacked them on top of each other for a makeshift perch. When he finally sat down, it was with the same sense of ceremony as a concert pianist fluffing his tailcoat. Lebowitz stretched his arms, curled his fingers, and hit the first chord decisively. He launched into an upbeat ditty with a rickety left-hand bassline that sounded almost like stride. The pianist hunched his shoulders in deep concentration until he'd finished the last chorus. Then he swiveled halfway around so that he could make eye contact with the bar customers.

"You recognize that?" he asked, as if seeking approval. "Johnny Cash." A couple folks smiled back, while others turned disinterestedly to their cell phones, treating Lebowitz as mere furniture in the room. He shrugged, acknowledging that you can't hold a bar audience captive, even for the duration of one song. It's one of the pitfalls of being a DJ. ●

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CD REVIEWS

SHADES OF GRAY

Inclement weather, repentant hip-hop and protean improvisers.

Meshell Ndegeocello

Weather

Singer/songwriter/bassist Meshell Ndegeocello clearly works at her own pace, routinely taking two or three years (sometimes longer) between releases. With producer *du jour* Joe Henry helming *Weather*, Ndegeocello continues fashioning her own singular sonic scene, seemingly oblivious to whatever's fashionable. While her last few albums featured jazz overtones, *Weather* is a blend of contemplative folk and semi-funk groove, with bits of rock in the mix.

Weather finds Ms. N backed by basically the same band as on 2009's *Devil's Halo*. Ndegeocello's voices (yes, plural) command center stage via spoken musings, sultry but slightly parched torch singing (almost a purr), and a wise trill. Most songs are anchored by a solid beat and filled out by atmospheric production (Henry thankfully avoids Daniel Lanois' soupy-ambience shtick) and crisp, distinct instruments. *Weather*'s songs aren't of the catchy variety, and in fact some of the songs sound a bit obtuse and could use some engaging melodic hooks. However, "Chance" pulses and prances in ways akin to The Police's "Every Breath You Take" — this could be a hit. Despite its mournful cadence, "Crazy and Wild" is a droll declaration of love and passion, with sing-song vocals and an oddly circus-music-sounding piano solo. Ndegeocello's wiry bass asserts itself on the Gang of Four-like (in their funky days) "Dirty World."

She also includes a couple of neat-o covers — Leonard Cohen's elegy "Chelsea Hotel" (which may have been intended for Janis Joplin) and The Soul Children's "Don't Take My Kindness for Weakness," which expresses respect-me assertiveness in a demure yet uncompromising manner. *Weather* embodies ambivalence and sharp contrasts, darkly and alluringly. (Naïve)

— Mark Keresman

Mike G

Award Tour

Mike G is Odd Future's secret weapon. Even on tracks that call for commotion, Mike's voice hardly rises above a whisper, hitting the pocket so perfectly that he often schools more-famous pals like Tyler, the Creator and Domo Genesis. In a group that thrives on overstatement, Mike plays the background. His cloudy bedroom eyes and half-cocked smile don't make a big first impression, but as *FADER* pointed out, he shares a tacit preciousness with someone like Omar Little from *The Wire*.

Unlike Tyler, who may have already reached his ceiling with the twin triumphs of *Bastard* and *Goblin* (especially if he follows through on his threat to make a full jazz record), Mike doesn't lean on gimmickry or bombast. But the seven-track *Award Tour EP* keeps the music of the best Odd Future records. "Michael Douglas" pulls off a double miracle, fitting a reference to The Smiths' "The Boy with the Thorn in His Side" into an autoethnographic account of schoolyard homicide: *Quiet nigga in the front of the class/With an autographed Bible and a gun in his back.*

"Chevron" spins its thesis — the fragmentation of the nuclear family — into a desperate, gently aching hymn; its MPC string sounds knotted like prayer beads. Religion looms heavy over *Award Tour*. Several times Mike alludes to the preachers and church folk who dotted his childhood with demands for repentance. *How the fuck is God gonna give my life a purpose?* he wonders atop the King Krule-esque synth thrums of "Vicks." It's a question he leaves unanswered. (self-released)

— M.T. Richards

The Necks

Mindset

Australia's Necks truly defy categorization. While individual members have backgrounds (and separate careers) in rock (mainstream and not), jazz, klezmer, and the avant garde, the mothership Necks stands alone, a sphere unto itself. Wholly instrumental, neither rock nor jazz but drawing freely from both, The Necks repeat and elaborate upon melodic and rhythmic motifs *à la* Philip Glass or Steve Reich, with one important distinction: This band is propelled by improvisation rather than strict composition.

Mindset consists of two lengthy pieces. The opening of "Rum Jungle" is tantamount to being dropped into a jungle scenario, with bass and drums laying down a dense, throbbing, angular, and pensive rhythm. Rattling, jarring piano chords cut a swath through the foliage as wisps of melody emerge gradually from the rear, rising from beneath the rumbling keys. More and more piano notes advance, virtually cascading as a summer storm. They call to mind the layered guitar textures of Robert Fripp, the swirl of neo-psychedelicists Spacemen 3, and the ringing massed guitars of Glenn Branca. Walls and cries resound, not unlike those heard on journeys to the center of the mind with Kraut rockers Neu and La Düsseldorf. This safari is mystifying, hypnotic, cathartic, and harrowing, sometimes all at once.

"Daylights" is another beast entirely. The bass almost functions as a drone, mantra-like, anchoring shimmering electric piano notes. Progressively the drumming (and cymbals) raise a not-too-distant ruckus, evoking drum 'n' bass and jungle. Assorted keyboards (at least, they sound like keyboards, though it's hard to verify with no instrumental credits included) and feedback are layered continuously while bright, shiny tones sparkle in the foreground. All told, *Mindset* is a demanding, compelling platter. (ReR Megacorp)

— Mark Keresman

LOCAL LICKS

Rocketship Rocketship

Rocketship Rocketship

Comparisons can be gauche, but here's one reserved for special occasions: Gwen Stefani. Miss Sumner, the guitarist and frontwoman of local surf rock outfit Rocketship Rocketship, sounds exactly like her — same ornamental trills, throaty growl, and vibrato hip. Her voice perfectly shapes the music, which is fast-paced, impatient, and reverb-heavy. It fits a standard garage template, except that the band enjoys throwing curve balls. (L.I.V.S. Records)

Valerie JonLois

doe

Not everyone will immediately gravitate to Valerie JonLois' strange warble, with its snooty staccato intonations and occasional hint of a foreign accent. That said, she has some sharp little tunes on this album, including a Latin dance number called "Big House" — in which she excoriates either a rich love interest or an indulged peer. Opener "Concise" is fit for a music box. Just skip any song with "Angel" or "Mother" in the title. (Curly Red Records)

The Midnight Snackers

Sudden Death

Self-imposed isolation accounts for both the concept and methodology behind this album, and it actually works pretty well. Bassist Aaron Sankin, multi-instrumentalist Brendan Ahern (both of arty rock group Debonis Rangers), guitarist-saxophonist Dylan Hass, and drummer Ralph Patterson (both of glam band Aftershocker) barricaded themselves in a studio for three days to write a five-song EP, but the results sound remarkably studied and thought-through. Sure, it's laden with purposefully un-pretty reverb. But it's also humorous and smart. (self-released)

Feral Cat

Spend Your Flesh

Guitar-drum duos have become increasingly popular in the local garage scene, as more musicians embrace the credo that "less is more," and that, by extension, some rock sounds more interesting without a bassline. Drummer Jessamyn Ciriee and guitarist/ukulele player Paul Montes have found a way to make it work, partly because Montes' melodies are rich enough to stand alone. Both members are better at shooting than singing, and they've written their lyrics accordingly. (self-released) ●

Bay Area bands, show us what you've got. Send CDs to Local Licks c/o the East Bay Express.

CONCERTS & CLUBS

THURSDAY 5

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Band Yoshi's Oakland. 8 p.m. $20

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Bolo Bolo hosted by Lee Farzon, with Bolo Luckett, Jimmy Hall, Dennis Foster, Connie Champagne, Leah Moreton [illegible] and Kat Kneagan. Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse. 8 p.m. $22.50, $24.50

[illegible] Band Armstrong, 9 p.m. $10

Bay Stone [illegible] with guest [illegible] singers. The Alley, 9 p.m. free

Tony Henderson Jazz [illegible] Quinn's Lighthouse, 9 p.m., free

Rock & Pop

Jono Hopley piano master of [illegible], oldies, jazz, & pop. Peter's Restaurant, 9 p.m. free

DJ [illegible] plays Happy Hour Punk Piano Down Velvet, 5 p.m. free

[illegible] with [illegible] Club, [illegible] Restaurant, and Blood Pocket. Bolo Club, 9 p.m. $5

[illegible] Sounders [illegible] session with the [illegible] & Blood Cans [illegible] Blood Bolo. Ashkenaz, 9 p.m. $10

The [illegible] Doc's Irish Sports Bar, 10 p.m. free

[illegible] with Sugar Candy Mountain. Wise, 9:30 p.m. $5

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] [illegible] Blues, 9 & 10 p.m. $15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Ana Moreau Trio live jazz. Ana Mandara, 7:30-11 p.m. free

[illegible] with guests. Yoshi's San Francisco, 8 p.m. free

George [illegible] Scott Howard, 6:30 p.m.

The Martini Brothers Le Colonial, 7:30 p.m. free

Stompy Piano San Francisco-based pianist performs live jazz and blues. Top of the Mark, 7:30-11:30 p.m. $10

Rock & Pop

The Brass Mugs with Wes Linder & His Deadly Monkey and The [illegible] Show. Brick & Mortar Music Hall, 9 p.m. $5, $8

[illegible] & The [illegible] with The [illegible] and The Gregors. [illegible] Tavern, 9 p.m. $5

[illegible] Trio with [illegible] and Modern American [illegible]. [illegible] of the Hill, 9 p.m. $6

[illegible] with [illegible] & The [illegible] and The Gregors. [illegible] Tavern, 9 p.m. $8

[illegible] Cat with Lisa Kennedy and The Tree Parade. 9 p.m. $6

The Y [illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible]. Bottom Up, 9 p.m. $8

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The Human Condition with Fog Rub and A-L. Cafe du Nord, 9 p.m. $10-$12

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] Los [illegible] Mojito, 9:30 p.m. free

[illegible] Thursdays traditional music & dancing with [illegible] 9 [illegible] Howard, Peña Pachamama, 9 p.m. $12

FRIDAY 6

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

First [illegible] burlesque night with [illegible] Light and live music. Stork Club, 9 p.m. free

[illegible] Tribute Band with [illegible] Bigsby and Kathy [illegible] featuring Bill Evans, Dave [illegible], Jon Merton, Paul Shelast, [illegible] Sanders, and Larry Conga. Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, 8 p.m. $20.50, $22.50

[illegible] [illegible] High Street Station Cafe, 7 p.m. $10-$18

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Blood Boppers [illegible], 9 p.m. free

Dan [illegible] [illegible] jazz with guest [illegible] singers. The Alley, 9 p.m., free

Rock & Pop

Jono Hopley piano master of [illegible], [illegible] jazz & pop. Peter's Restaurant, 9 p.m. free

First [illegible] of and [illegible] [illegible] 9 p.m. $5

[illegible] Widow with Culture Kids, Chorillos, and Bolo [illegible] The Uptown, 9 p.m. free

[illegible] Night featuring The [illegible] Bones [illegible] Blood [illegible], Space [illegible] the songs of [illegible], Sweet, and [illegible], and special guests. [illegible] 9 p.m.

[illegible] with Kevin Brothers, Emily's Army, Bobby [illegible] And The Children [illegible], and The Smell. 924 Gilman, 7:30 p.m. $7

[illegible] of [illegible] Green, plus special guests. Ashkenaz, 9 p.m. $12

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] The New Parish, 9:30 p.m. $15, $20

Tower of Power Yoshi's Oakland, 8 & 10 p.m. $40-$45

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] [illegible] Ashkenaz, 9 p.m. $15, $12

SF Latin Jazz Youth [illegible] Concert [illegible] La Peña's [illegible] La Peña Cultural Center, 7 p.m. $7-$12

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Joyce [illegible] & [illegible] [illegible] 8 p.m.-midnight, free

Lacey Smith & Her [illegible] [illegible] Blues, 9 & 10 p.m. $20

[illegible] with The Stages of Sleep and The [illegible]. Bottom Up, 9 p.m. $8

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Brothers Trio live jazz. Ana Mandara, 8-11:30 p.m. free

[illegible] jazz [illegible]. Top of the Mark, 9 p.m. $10

[illegible] Ensemble [illegible] & Beckett Books & Records, 5-20-8 p.m., free

[illegible] with guests. Yoshi's San Francisco, 8-9 p.m., free

George [illegible] [illegible] 6:30 p.m.

Rock & Pop

Piano [illegible] & The [illegible] Amnesia, 9 p.m.

[illegible] with [illegible] Bird, [illegible] and Owl [illegible]. Bottom of the Hill, 9 p.m. $10, $12

Magic [illegible] with The Looks, The Chuckleberries, and [illegible]. Cafe du Nord, 9 p.m. $12

My Parade with [illegible] and The Yes Cats. [illegible] Tavern, 9:30 p.m. $6

[illegible] [illegible] with [illegible], The [illegible] and [illegible]. Rickshaw Stop, 9 p.m. $10

[illegible] with [illegible]. Great American Music Hall, 9 p.m. $20

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] with [illegible] MCs and [illegible]. The Independent, 9 p.m. $18, $20

[illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible] Tonight. [illegible] Hall, 9 p.m. $7, $10

SATURDAY 7

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

East Bay [illegible] [illegible] piano, country, bluegrass, alt country, honky-tonk, blues, & more. The [illegible] Lounge, 10 p.m. free

The Lovelight [illegible] Cafe Van Kleef, 9:30 p.m. $5

[illegible] with [illegible] Armstrong Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, 8 p.m. $20.50, $22.50

Classical & Opera

[illegible] [illegible] woodwind [illegible]. [illegible] Chapel, 8 p.m. $15, $30

[illegible] for [illegible] [illegible] of cello and piano music. Crowden Center for Music in the Community, 8 p.m. $15 suggested donation

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

The [illegible] Brothers Trio Armstrong, 9 p.m. $15, $12

[illegible] Trio Pleasanton Piano Company, 8 p.m. $18

Lazz & Joy Cafe of Joy, 5:30 p.m., free

Dan [illegible] [illegible] jazz with guest [illegible] singers. The Alley, 9 p.m., free

[illegible] [illegible] 9 p.m., free

Rock & Pop

[illegible] with Lenz and Logs, [illegible] Plough, 9:30 p.m. $5-$10

[illegible] Birthday Bash [illegible] by The [illegible] Church of the [illegible], and featuring the [illegible]. [illegible] 9 p.m. $5

Jono Hopley piano master of [illegible], [illegible] jazz, & pop. Peter's Restaurant, 9 p.m. free

[illegible] with The [illegible] and The [illegible] Family [illegible]. The Uptown, 10 p.m. $20

[illegible] and friends. Actual Cafe, 7 p.m. free

[illegible] Showcase featuring The Story So Far, The [illegible], [illegible] Coming, and [illegible]. 924 Gilman, 7 p.m. $10

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] with [illegible] guests. Ashkenaz, 9 p.m. $17, $10 students

DJ [illegible] [illegible] Larder, 9 p.m. free

[illegible] And [illegible] The New Parish, 9 p.m. $22, $28

Tower of Power Yoshi's Oakland, 8 & 10 p.m. $40-$45

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] with Shady Maples and [illegible] McFarling & Megan Keely [illegible]. Cafe du Nord, 8:30 p.m. $10-$12

[illegible] East [illegible] Saloon, 9-11 p.m. free

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Thurs, Jan 5 [illegible]
BAND OF BROTHERZ
feat. Special Guest MELVIN SEALS (JGB)

Fri-Sat Jan 6-7 [illegible]
IDLE WARSHIP
feat. TALIB KWELI & RES

Sun Jan 8 [illegible]
KAUMAKAIWA KANAKA'OLE
w/Shawn Pimental

[illegible]
CALVIN KEYS

Thurs-Sun Jan 12-15
ROY HARGROVE QUINTET

Fri Jan 13 10:30pm in The Lounge
LADYTRON DJ SET
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Fri Jan 13
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feat. ROY ROGERS & RAY MANZAREK of The Doors

Sat Jan 14
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feat. DENNIS CHAMBERS

Mon Jan 16 [illegible]
MARTIN LUTHER

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PICKS

David K. Mathews' Ray Charles Project

There's no shortage of contemporary musicians who've used Ray Charles as a muse, from Kanye West — who famously sampled "I Got a Woman" (albeit the Jamie Foxx version) for his hit song "Gold Digger" — to local folks like Mike Irwin Johnson, whose fourteen-piece Rayband serves as an homage to the great bandleader. And now keyboardist David K. Mathews has followed suit. Famous for anchoring the rhythm sections of singer Etta James, Oakland soul group Tower of Power, and Santana, Mathews is thoroughly steeped in the blues. He's devised an interesting configuration for the Ray Charles Project, placing himself on organ and Chris Cain on piano. He'll also feature two well-established bandleaders, Glenn Walters (who humbly describes his voice as "warm" and "furry") and ex-Santana collaborator Tony Lindsay. Mathews promises the night will culminate with a jam session, which should be pretty satisfying given the caliber of these musicians. At Yoshi's (510 Embarcadero West, Oakland) on Wednesday, Jan. 11, 8 p.m., $16. Yoshis.com — *Rachel Swan*

Phonte and 9th Wonder

When the critically acclaimed (and commercially successful) hip-hop duo Little Brother split mysteriously and (reportedly) acrimoniously last year, music fans were crushed. Here was the rare hip-hop group that paid homage to the boom-bap rhythms of the old-school rap of the late Eighties and early Nineties without sounding like it was ripping those off, and that stood out based on quality of musicianship and tightness of rhyme in a moment when it seemed like mainstream rap was hell-bent on abandoning both — not to mention having a fairly legendary live show. Well, fortunately for all of us, two-thirds of the group's members — emcee Phonte and DJ 9th Wonder — have reunited for a national tour including a stop at The New Parish (589 18th St., Oakland) on Saturday, Jan. 7. *Reunited* and it feels so good, and all that. 9 p.m., $20-$40. TheNewParish.com — *Ellen Cushing*

The Driftwood Singers

The Driftwood Singers

Los Angeles' folk duo The Driftwood Singers have a sound that harks back to the halcyon days of the American folk revival. Heck, the band's name even sounds like the moniker of an obscure folk band. Its sound is created through autoharp, banjo, mandolin, fiddle, and two unadorned voices. Pearl Charles sings with the honeyed tones of a front-porch diva, while Kris Hutson's voice has a raw, cracked quality that sounds like it's coming from an Edison cylinder. Their timeless songs sound as much like old-time music as modern folk — not a bad place for a young band to be. At Amnesia (853 Valencia Street, San Francisco) on Thursday, Jan. 5, 9 p.m., $7. AmnesiaTheBar.com. Later at The Starry Plough (3101 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley) on Thursday, Jan. 12, 8 p.m., $7. StarryPloughPub.com — *J. Poet*

Grass Widow

There's a video for Grass Widow's song "Milo Minute" in which the three women of the band calmly enter the Franklin Park Zoo in Boston. They set up their instruments and turn toward a glassed-in display to face their audience of one: Gigi, Kiki, Kira, Kimani, Kambiri, and Kit — gorillas all. The song is a good example of Grass Widow's appeal. The band doesn't rely on distortion or effects to spruce up its rock songs; rather, it employs simple, layered, borderline-apathetic vocals over driving beats and catchy riffs. And the preoccupied primates can't seem to take their eyes off of them. Chambers, Culture Kids, and Wave Army fill out the bill at The Uptown (Telegraph Ave.) on Friday, Jan. 6, 9 p.m., free. UptownNightclub.com — *Will Butler*

C&C

[illegible] Scott Bottom & Blues 6 & 10 p.m. $20
[illegible] folk music with Shori Mignano, Caffe Trieste, 10:30 a.m.-12:15 p.m. free
Timothy O'Neil Band with The Highway Poets, Lonesome Locomotive, and Bobby Joe Valentine, Hotel Utah, 8 p.m. $10

Classical & Opera

The Boar's Head Festival featuring SF Renaissance Voices, soprano [illegible], [illegible], and more. Seventh Avenue Presbyterian Church, 7:30 p.m. $10, $15

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Ana Mendoza Trio free jazz, Ana Mandara, 6-11:30 p.m. free
Eddie Pasternak and with guests, Yoshi's San Francisco, 8-9 p.m. free
George Michalski Scott Howard, 6:30 p.m.

Rock & Pop

[illegible] with Man in Space and [illegible] & The City Birds, 8 p.m. $15

The Campbell Apartment with Chris James & The Rooters, [illegible], and The Midway Gang, Brick & Mortar Music Hall, 8 p.m., $7-$10
The English Beat with the [illegible], Bimbo's 365 Club, 9 p.m. $22, $25
[illegible] with Alan Hampton, Great American Music Hall, 8 p.m., $20
[illegible] with Panther Palms and Feelings, The Independent, 9 p.m., $20
[illegible] happy hour show with [illegible] and [illegible], 3 p.m., free
[illegible] with [illegible] and Bobby Joe Ebola & the Children MacNuggits, Rickshaw Stop, 8 p.m. $12
[illegible] with [illegible], Hemlock Tavern, 9:30 p.m. $8
The Young with The [illegible] and The [illegible], Bottom of the Hill, 9 p.m. $10

Soul, Rock, R&B & Hip-Hop

Saturday Night Soul Party with [illegible], [illegible], and Brandon Howard, [illegible], 10 p.m. $5-$10

SUNDAY 8

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Americana Unplugged Jupiter, 8 p.m., free
Jimmy's All-Star Super Sessions Jimmy hosts a different blues band every week, Pete's Restaurant, 5 p.m. free
Sunday Morning Blues with [illegible], Caffe Mediterraneum, 10 a.m. free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Jazz and R&B Night Downey's [illegible], 6:30 p.m. free
[illegible] Jazz Quartet classic & contemporary jazz, Coffee Mill, 3-6 p.m., free
[illegible] Cafe Van Kleef, 4 p.m.
[illegible] Sextet Cd Howard, [illegible], 8:30 p.m. $15, $12
The [illegible] Trio [illegible] Lounge, 6:30-10 p.m. free
[illegible] Trio [illegible], 6:30-9 p.m. free
[illegible] & [illegible] Piedmont Piano Company, 8 p.m. $20

Rock & Pop

[illegible] with [illegible], A.R.S., [illegible], and [illegible], 924 Gilman, 5 p.m.
[illegible] Scott [illegible], 8:30 p.m. free
Songwriters [illegible] [illegible] Cafe, 5 p.m. free

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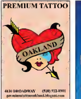

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THU 1/5 **SELECTOR: DJ TOPH ONE & DJ OUKEY**
9 pm Whether contributing to XLR8R Mag, or running his long time Red Wine parties throughout SF, Toph One welcomes a special guest DJ Oukey (SF Vintage Reggae Society/ Massori Lounge) taking you on a voyage through the Jamaican musical landscape of the 1960s and 70s: ska, rocksteady and early and roots reggae, with a dash of mento, calypso, rumba and American soul.
http://www.facebook.com/tophone

DANA SALZMAN **FRI 1/6**
9 pm Classically and then jazz trained with a degree from the New School of Jazz and Contemporary music, Oakland's own Dana Salzman influences range from Etta James, Roy Ayers and West Coast rap. Dana also does production and session work as a keyboardist and singer while putting on captivating live shows featuring some of the day's best musicians.
http://www.myspace.com/danasalzman

SAT 1/7 **D-LUCCA**
9 pm Bassist Daniel Lucca Parenti, shortened to D-Lucca, is a SF native who has performed with many jazz legends, including Rosemary Clooney, Michael Brecker and Lionel Hampton. As with Stanley Clarke and the late Wayman Tisdale, D-Lucca can count himself as one of the few artists able to bring the piccolo bass into a well-warranted limelight, and has definitely found his niche within the newest wave of modern jazz. "D-Lucca has fused jazz and rock so beautifully that you don't know when one ends and the other begins" - JazzReview.com
http://www.myspace.com/dlucca

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What's stopping us? Nothing. February is Record Production Month. You have no reason to say no, and nothing to lose.

Dust off your gear.
Set aside all distractions.
Get the band back together.
And get to work creating new music!

The RPM Challenge is simple:
Record an album in 28 days, just because you can. That's 10 songs or 35 minutes of original material recorded during the month of February.

Last year, over 80 Bay Area bands participated, and the movement is quickly growing!

To participate or learn more, visit our website:
www.RPMChallenge.com

On March 24, the *Express* will host a celebratory listening party where one track from every album completed is played.
See you there!

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C&C

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Radio of Bones Yoshi's Oakland, 7 & 9 p.m. $40-$45

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaeton

The Brazilian Exotic Project featuring Sandy Julie Brennan and Bossa Zamba, Starry Plough 9 p.m. $8

Crossing the Heron Afro-Cuban rumba percussion & dance party. Cafe Valparaiso 3:30-6:30 p.m. free

Kerouac and Oakland Beat Ashkenaz, 9:30 p.m. $12-$18

Ozzie Stan's Reggae and Rock Steady Dance Cafe Rendeva, 8 p.m. $7

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

Grandy Taylor Pier Parkside, 4 p.m., free

Emilia Lomeli-Strain with Dale Ayer and Dean Zaslow, Hotel Utah, 8 p.m. $10-$12

The Church Club Dance Society's Road to Rosedale Dance featuring Wendy DeWitt with Kirk Harwood, Paula Ridi & Jay Gray, Tye of the Rap, Chris Cole, Karen Neil, and Tommy Castro, Jennifer & Blues, 1 p.m. $35, $24

Terry Savastano Johnny Foley's Irish House, 9 p.m., free

Classical & Opera

Oakland Church on piano for Sunday champagne brunch. Joy of the Nam, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. $18 for brunch plus gratuity and tax

Gospel & Vocal

Gospel Brunch with GuitarPerfect & rotating Church 1330 on Oakland, 11 a.m. & 1 p.m., $39. Brunch/Horace

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Radio Lutsano & Haruna with Andrew Speight, Sam Siebenthaler & Mark Goodway, Ragazzi Church 4:30-6:30 p.m. $7

Rock & Pop

Outrage Angel with Broadway Jerk @ Handsome Rock and Rocketship Rocketship, Oakland Tavern, 5 p.m., $7

The Oakland/GoMana with Extropia, West of Sunset, Midnight Lakeshore Rock, The Freaks, Diurals, The Church for Dear & Oakland, Oakland, and Oakland INA Lounge 9:30 p.m., $10, $12

MONDAY 9

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Uptown Hobble Hobble live burlesque. The Uptown 9 p.m. $5

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

Oakland O'Neill & Kenny Washington Yoshi's Oakland 8 p.m. $10

Rock & Pop

Tree with The Early and Lyons, 1-2-3-4 Go! Oakland, 8 p.m. $6

SAN FRANCISCO

Rock & Pop

Anthology with The Suburbinati Gang, Bottom of the Hill 9 p.m. $8, $10

The Soft White Sixties with Jane Corry, Big Eagle, Colonel Kelly and Amy Roundup Cafe du Nord, 8:30 p.m. $10-$12

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

Oth of Kal with Grand Eclipse, Elbo Room, 9 p.m. $8-$10

TUESDAY 10

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

Country Western Dance Night with Nobody's, Vernie's Bar & Grill 7:30-11 p.m. free

Church Hooty Peter's Restaurant, 7:30-9 p.m. free

VENUE DIRECTORY

EAST BAY

57th Street Art Gallery 4111 Telegraph Ave., Oakland 510-654-6974

924 Gilman 924 Gilman St., Berkeley, 510-525-9926.

Ace Bar & Lounge 492 Gorth St., Loma Pista, Oakland, 510-444-2241

Piedmont Pub 1827 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-643-2472.

The Alley 3325 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-444-8505

Oakland Radio 2495 Telegraph Ave., Berkeley, 510-549-1125.

Ambrosia 4701 Vinesa Vista Ave., Martinez, 925-228-0885.

Art House Gallery & Cultural Center 2905 Shattuck Ave., Oakland, 510-472-3170

Ashkenaz 1317 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-525-5054

The Avenue 135 Park Pl., Point Richmond, 510-231-1300

Bench and Bar 510 17th St., Oakland, 510-444-7288.

Studio Radio Center for the Arts 1601 Lincoln St., Alameda, 510-523-6957

The Barn 1001 B St., Hayward, 510-886-6325.

Cafe Van Kleef 1621 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-763-7711.

Caffe Mercato 2501 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-540-5598

Chester's Bayview Club 1508 Bonita St., Pt. Oakland, 510-845-3095.

Club 1220 1220 Pine St., Walnut Creek, 925-938-4550.

Club 21 2111 Church St., Oakland, 510-268-9425

Club Radio 420 3rd St., Oakland, 510-433-0166

Cotton Mill 3363 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-465-4224

Congo Lounge 5422 College Ave., Oakland, 510-461-2882.

Duffy's Irish Sports Bar 1524 Civic Dr., Walnut Creek, 925-932-1331.

Duck Velvets 347 14th St., Oakland, 510-663-8711

Sports Hall 2305 Alameda Ave., Broadway, 405-283-0200.

Easy Lounge 3255 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-338-4811.

Eli's Mile High Club 3630 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, Oakland, 510-594-0888.

Era Art Bar and Lounge 19 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-832-4400

Church & Beer Boutique 120 Broadway, Oakland, 510-683-2250

First Congregational Church 2345 Channing Way, Berkeley, 510-848-3696.

First Presbyterian Church 2619 Broadway, Oakland, 510-444-3555.

Fox Oakland 1807 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-745-3600.

Fanzo 111 W Tennyson Rd., Hayward, 510-783-8197

Freight & Salvage 2020 Addison St., Berkeley, 510-644-2020.

Greek Hall UC Berkeley (Gayley Way at College Ave.), Berkeley, 510-642-9988.

High Street Station 3300 High St., Alameda, 510-995-8849

Forest Paradise Club 1436 Oakland St., Alameda, 510-865-3225.

Restaurant 2561 Oakland St., Berkeley, 510-849-5313.

Forder Community Church of the East Bay 1414 Walnut St., Berkeley, 510-848-0231

Ivor Patrick's 1853 Park St., Alameda, 510-522-5555.

Julie's Coffee & Tea Garden 1223 Park St., Alameda, 510-865-2385.

Jupiter 2181 Shattuck Ave., Oakland, 510-843-8277

Kabana Bay 1438 Oakland St., Oakland, 510-238-4980.

Kimball's Carnival 522 2nd St., Oakland, 510-444-8421

Kingman's Lucky Lounge 3332 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-465-5464

Kingman's Ivy Room 858 San Pablo Ave., Albany, 510-526-5888.

La Peña Cultural Center 3105 Shattuck Ave., Berkeley, 510-849-2568.

Lake Merritt United Methodist Church 1330 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-465-4793

Lakeshore Church Baptist Church 3534 Lakeshore Ave., Oakland, 510-893-2484

Laney College Theater 900 Fallon St., Oakland, 510-434-3045.

The Layover 1517 Franklin St., Oakland, 510-834-1541

Lost Weekend Lounge 2320 Santa Clara Ave., Alameda, 510-523-4700

Lounge 3411 3411 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, 510-531-3411

Luka's Taproom & Lounge 2221 Broadway, Oakland, 510-451-4677

Mauro's Sports Bar & Grill 2721 N. Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-258-7000

Maxwell's Lounge 341 13th St., Oakland, 510-839-6169

Mills College 5000 MacArthur Blvd., Oakland, 510-430-2296

Missouri Lounge 2600 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-2080

The New Parish 579 18th St., Oakland, 510-444-7474

Church Cafe 6506 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-595-5344

Oakland City Center 501 13th St., Oakland, 510-738-8930

Oakland, Room Speakeasy 630 3rd St., Oakland, 510-763-1146.

Oakland Radio 1909 Callejon Way, Oakland, 510-568-2921.

Paradise Lounge 2272 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-736-8996.

Paramount Theatre 2025 Broadway, Oakland, 510-465-6400

Piedmont Center for the Arts 801 Magnolia Ave., Piedmont, PiedmontCenterfortheArts.org

Piedmont Piano Company 1728 San Pablo Ave., Oakland, 510-547-8188.

Quinn's Lighthouse 1951 Embarcadero Cove, Oakland, 510-536-2050.

Radio 435 13th St., Oakland, 510-451-2889

Rhythmix Cultural Works 2513 Blanding Ave., Alameda, 510-865-5060

The Rock Steady 4745 San Pablo Ave., Oakland

Roundup Saloon 3653 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Lafayette, 925-284-9827

Rooster's Restaurant 1300 Clement Ave., Alameda, 510-331-9490

Ruby Radio 132 14th St., Oakland, 510-444-7124

Saddle Rack 42011 Boscell Rd., Oakland, 510-979-0411

Oakland, Radio Cafe 2284 Oakland Ave., Berkeley, 510-548-1158

Oakland Nightclub 2451 San Ramon Valley Blvd. (Ste. 120), San Ramon, 925-831-9411

Shoreline Amphitheatre One Amphitheatre Pkwy., Mountain View, 650-967-3000

Speisekammer 2424 Lincoln Ave., Alameda, 510-522-1300

Spontaneous Lounge 2568 N Main St., Walnut Creek, 925-977-5888.

St. Mark's Episcopal Church 2300 Bancroft Way, Oakland, 510-848-5107

St. John's Presbyterian Church 2727 College Ave., Berkeley, 510-845-6830.

Starry Plough 3101 Oakland Ave., Berkeley, 510-841-2082.

Rock Club 110 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-444-8801

Studio 1510 1510 8th St., Oakland.

Subterranean Art House 2179 Bancroft Way, Berkeley, 510-388-1284.

Bruno Rogers 464 E. 14th St., San Leandro, 510-553-9800

Refuge 3120 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-452-8100

Vernie's Bar & Grill 2448 Mt. Diablo St., Concord, 925-685-0326

Vinyl 201 Broadway, Oakland, 510-452-1828.

Bruno Vineyards Restaurant 5050 Arroyo Rd., Livermore, 925-456-2400

Oakland Auditorium UC Oakland, Oakland, 510-642-4290.

White Beatrice 8001 Telegraph Ave., Oakland, 510-652-2620

Yoshi's 510 Embarcadero West, Oakland, 510-238-9200

Zellerbach Hall UC Berkeley, Berkeley, 510-642-9988.

Zero Oakland 552 Grand Ave., Oakland, 510-839-9124.

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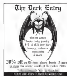
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C&C

Two Gypsy & Dancers with Gypsy dance Room at 4 p.m., Ashkenaz, 8:30 p.m. $10

Experimental & Avant-Garde

[illegible] The Uptown, 9:30 p.m. free

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

The Brewing Co. featuring [illegible] Classic Volante, 4 p.m. free
Eddie Pasternak free with [illegible], Cafe [illegible] 6:30 p.m. free
[illegible] dinner jazz with guest cabaret singers, The Alley, 9 p.m. free

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

The [illegible] spoken word with comedy and [illegible] Ladder, 1 p.m., free
[illegible] Jupiter, 8 p.m. free

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] Yoshi's Oakland, 8 p.m. $12-$66

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] with Jake Walters, [illegible], 8 p.m. $8

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] playing soft jazz piano, Top of the Mark, 4:30-11:30 p.m., $5-$10

Rock & Pop

[illegible] Umbrella Park Chalet Brewery, 6:30 p.m. free
The [illegible] with The Cult, [illegible], and [illegible], Slim's, 7:30 p.m. $11
[illegible] with The Shrouds, The [illegible], and [illegible] Family Sisters, [illegible], 8 p.m., $8

WEDNESDAY 11

EAST BAY

Blues, Folk & Country

[illegible] Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, 8 p.m., $20.50-$22.50

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Brewhouse, 6:30 p.m. free
Jazz Theory Performance [illegible] 57th Street Gallery, 6-8 p.m.
Live Jazz Townhouse Bar & Grill, 7:30 p.m., free
[illegible] Jazz Room [illegible], 7-10 p.m. free
[illegible] dinner jazz with guest cabaret singers, The Alley, 4 p.m., free
[illegible] piano music Caffe di [illegible], 8-9 p.m. free

Rock & Pop

KALX 90.7 FM Presents: Big Grill This week: [illegible] guests, The Uptown, 8:30 p.m. free
Mod Night [illegible] Lounge, 9 p.m., free

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Project featuring Tony Lindsay, Chris Cain, and [illegible], Yoshi's [illegible], 8 p.m., $10

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] mediterranean music, [illegible], 8 p.m. $5
[illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible] dance lesson at 7:30 p.m., Ashkenaz, 4:30 p.m. $10
[illegible] Night with Reggae Flash and DJ [illegible], Dorsey's Locker, 11 p.m., free

SAN FRANCISCO

Blues, Folk & Country

The Wounded [illegible] with The [illegible] and the [illegible], and [illegible] Hotel Utah, 8 p.m. $8

Jazz, Lounge & Cabaret

[illegible] Top of the Mark, 7:30-11:30 p.m., $10
[illegible] with [illegible], Amnesia, 1 p.m.
[illegible] with the [illegible] Session, Amnesia, 4 p.m., free

Rock & Pop

[illegible] Showcase featuring [illegible], and [illegible], [illegible], 4 p.m. $10
[illegible] with The [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible] Tavern, 9 p.m. $7
[illegible] with [illegible] and [illegible], [illegible] Gallery, 7:30 p.m. $8
[illegible] with [illegible] and The [illegible], Cafe du Nord, 8 p.m. $10
[illegible] The Independent, 8 p.m., $18-$20
The [illegible] with The [illegible] Family Band and The [illegible], [illegible] of the Hall, 9 p.m. $8
[illegible] with The [illegible] and The [illegible], [illegible] Music Hall, 4 p.m. $5-$8

Soul, Funk, R&B & Hip-Hop

[illegible] Dance party with [illegible], and [illegible], [illegible] 9:30 p.m. $5

World, Latin, Reggae & Reggaetón

[illegible] and la Banda Latin, American, Mediterranean & contemporary [illegible], 8 p.m., $12

Submissions for music listings should be e-mailed to Clubs@EastBayExpress.com or mailed to Clubs Editor, East Bay Express, 620 3rd St., Oakland, CA 94607. Deadline is 14 days prior to the event date

VENUE DIRECTORY

SAN FRANCISCO

[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-431-1200
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-264-[illegible]
[illegible] Gallery 116 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 222 Hyde St., 415-440-0222
[illegible] 330 Ritch St., 415-541-9574
[illegible] 3115 [illegible] St., 415-431-[illegible]
[illegible] 853 Valencia St., 415-970-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] Bush St., 415-771-1813
[illegible] Bar & Lounge 1 Tillman Pl., 415-362-[illegible]
[illegible] 5627 California St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 1300 Great Highway, 415-[illegible]
Gallery Bar 2298 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 1025 Columbus Ave., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 1001 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 1235 17th St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] Music Hall [illegible] Mission St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 2300 Mission St., 415-643-[illegible]
Cafe du Nord 2170 Market St., 415-861-5016
[illegible] 308 Haight St., 415-[illegible]
Caffe [illegible] [illegible] Vallejo St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 1190 Folsom St., 415-431-3332
The [illegible] [illegible] St., 415-441-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-883-1221
[illegible] 201 Van Ness Ave., 415-864-6000
[illegible] Lounge 325 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 2496 3rd St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 950 Geary St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 2030 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 3158 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 641 Fillmore St., 415-[illegible]
The [illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
The Fillmore 1805 Geary Blvd., 415-346-6000
[illegible] Music Hall 859 O'Farrell St., 415-885-0750
[illegible] 1130 Polk St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] Van Ness Ave., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 520 4th St., 415-546-[illegible]
The Independent 628 Divisadero St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] Grill 2920 Geary Blvd., 415-[illegible]
Johnny Foley's Irish House 243 O'Farrell St., 415-954-0777
[illegible] [illegible] Polk St., 415-[illegible]
The [illegible] 3223 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 3225 22nd St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 444 Jessie St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
Mr. [illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
The [illegible] [illegible] Ave., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 1021 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
Park Chalet Brewery 1000 Great Highway, 415-386-8439
[illegible] 1608 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
Public Works 161 Erie St., 415-932-[illegible]
[illegible] Lounge 1095 Polk St., 415-[illegible]
The Regency Ballroom 1300 Van Ness Ave., 866-920-7849
[illegible] Lounge 628 20th St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 155 Fell St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 800 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 222 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 420 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
San Francisco Conservatory of Music 50 Oak St., 415-503-6275
[illegible] 451 [illegible] Ave., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 2000 18th St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 333 11th St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 2925 16th St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 550 [illegible] Ave., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 299 9th St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] Gallery 2183 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 501 Geary St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 514 Fifth St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 3600 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
Top of The Mark 999 California St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] Lounge 442 Broadway St., 415-[illegible]
The [illegible] 902 [illegible] Rd., 415-[illegible]
[illegible] 1330 [illegible] St., 415-[illegible]

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DJ & DANCE

THURSDAY 5

EAST BAY

Academy Night w/ DJ and VJ Joe G. spinning hip-hop, R&B, bachata, & Top 40. White Horse Inn, 9 p.m., $3, students free w/ valid ID

Club Fever w/ Sooo Djs spinning classic reggae & dancehall, Shashamane Restaurant, 10 p.m., free

Attic Club w/ DJs Karlo & Chris Fox, Shattuck Down Low, 9 p.m., free

DJ Adrift spinning indie/electro and candy [illegible], Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 p.m., free

DJ Dosa The Layover, 9 p.m., free

DJ Night DJs spinning bodacious pop, mind-blowing rock, & urban hip-hop, Kip's Restaurant, 9:30 p.m., free

DJ Trick spinning lounge, Lost Weekend Lounge, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., free

Drop Top Disco w/ Salvatore Malandro and Vladimir Gonzalo & Jay Sonic, The Layover, 11 p.m., free

Jungle Jungle w/ DJs Pastor, Basil Kyle and Uncle Joe, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 9 p.m., free

Riff Raff indie pop, mash-ups, new wave, [illegible], 10 p.m.-2 a.m., free

Volante of Dance w/ DJ Fluid Cut spinning hip-hop, R&B, The Missouri Lounge, 10 p.m., free

We Life We Beat featuring DJ Tanse spinning 70s & 80s hits, Forbidden Room, 9 p.m., free

Woman Dance Weekend spinning [illegible] Carlos Bono and Cecil [illegible], 9 p.m., free

FRIDAY 6

EAST BAY

Afro Job w/ DJs Eddy Baker and [illegible] spinning hot raps and slow jams, The Missouri Lounge, 10 p.m., free

Spinning w/ **DJ Ryan** DJ Ryan spinning the hottest music in the Bay Area, White Horse Inn, 9 p.m., $5

Elevation w/ DJ Ron the Vinyl Archaeologist, The Layover, 10 p.m.

Friday Nite Jams w/ DJ Sugar B, Forum, 10 p.m., $5

Happy Dance w/ DJ Golden Grum spinning punk, rock, soul, & indie rock, The Missouri Lounge, 6-10 p.m., free

Hip-Hop Dance Dance w/ Breezy DJ, Club 1220, 9 p.m., $5

Jams Explosion DJ Jorge Eclipse spins cumbia, salsa, merengue, banda, Spanish pop, & house, [illegible], 9 p.m.-2 a.m., $5-$10

Mezcalada weekly in-house DJ salsa, [illegible], 7-10 p.m., free

Oldies Night w/ DJ [illegible] spinning classic soul, disco & R&B, Island Paradise Club, 10 p.m., ladies free before 11:30 p.m.

Retro-Active Daniel [illegible] 80s pop night, Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 p.m., free

Toofly w/ DJ Jams Eclipse spinning northern soul, Motown, 60s, disco, punk, new wave, & rock 'n' roll, Ruby Room, 10 p.m., free

Vyle w/ DJs [illegible] & classic spinning roots, reggae, dancehall, & soul, Shashamane Restaurant, 10 p.m., $5

World Club Fridays spinning DJ [illegible] spinning soca, samba, salsa, merengue, dancehall reggae, bhangra, Arabic music, & more, Cargo Lounge, 10 p.m.

More Listings Online
Get info about hundreds of musical events at EastBayExpress.com or m.EastBayExpress.com

SATURDAY 7

EAST BAY

AD Productions & Hookipla DJs spinning R&B & hip-hop, Forum, 10 p.m., free

Club Maxwell's DJs Jerry Blob & Soul Profess spin R&B, soul, funk, reggae, & hip-hop, Maxwell's Lounge, 9 p.m., $20

Club Mission w/ DJs Burn Cholo, Giga T & guests spinning hip-hop & R&B, [illegible], 9 p.m., $5-$12

Country Saturdays followed by hip-hop & house at midnight, Club 1220, 8:30 p.m.-midnight, $5

Dancehall Saturdays w/ Action Jones spinning reggae, dancehall, & hip-hop, The Avenue, 9 p.m., free

DJ Night DJs spinning bodacious pop, mind-blowing rock, & urban hip-hop, Kip's Restaurant, 9:30 p.m., free

Superstar Saturday Night w/ DJ [illegible], White Horse Inn, 9 p.m., $5

La Bola Loca with DJs spinning [illegible] plus hot go-go [illegible], Club 21, 9 p.m., $6-$15

Magic Milk Tastes DJ [illegible] & classic [illegible], Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 p.m., free

Pop History 101 DJs spin [illegible] hits from the [illegible], Ruby Room, 10 p.m.-2 a.m., free

Soweto Saturdays DJ Jams & guests spin soul, hip-hop, R&B, [illegible], reggaeton, & more, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 9 p.m., $10

Sabroso Saturdays w/ DJ Rueben, Shattuck Down Low, 9 p.m., $10, $5 students

Warm-Up w/ DJ Fluid Cut spinning hip-hop, R&B, The Missouri Lounge, 9:30 p.m., free

SUNDAY 8

EAST BAY

DJ Toady Kingman's Lucky Lounge, 9 p.m., free

King of Kings DJ Smoke-Bro and classic [illegible], Shattuck Down Low, 9 p.m., $15, Happy students free before 11 p.m.

The Soul-Full Club DJ [illegible] & classic open soulful grooves, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 9 p.m., free

PICKS

High Life with DJ Matthew Africa

Berkeley High graduate and UC Berkeley law school grad Matthew Africa is better known as a maker of mixtapes than an academic, but that doesn't mean he's underappreciated. In fact, he's a veritable fixture in the local club scene, famous for co-hosting a hip-hop show on KALX 90.7 FM in the early Nineties, which he conceived with fellow record junky (and founder of the now-defunct ABB Records label) Beni B. Matthew Africa (that's his real name, by the way) can conceive and tailor a mix for just about any theme, from the obvious (best of Too Short, or R. Kelly) to the abstract ("love"). He writes meticulous liner notes for each of them, explaining his creative process down to the most frustrating details. Like a computer that kept crashing. It's a pretty entertaining read. Africa's new residency happens every first Thursday; look for him at The Layover (1517 Franklin St., Oakland) on Thursday, Jan. 5. 9:30 p.m., free. OaklandLayover.com — *Rachel Swan*

Mark Farina

Often credited with not only popularizing house music in San Francisco, but also creating a tangible scene, Mark Farina has been a local fixture for nearly two decades. He's made at least a dozen compilations — including his seven-disc acid jazz series *Mushroom Jazz*, which began as a dinky proposition but ultimately garnered wide acclaim. He's famous for playing B-side hip-hop and rare discs, and generally cares more about the artistic merit of his mixes than about pandering to a crowd. Such traits have guaranteed him staying power in a scene that's notoriously fickle. On Saturday, Jan. 7, Farina descends on Mighty (119 Utah St., San Francisco) with a lineup that's as close to blue blood as you get in Bay Area house: David Harness, Rooz, Adnan, Bo, Buckner and Ken Minn. 10 p.m., $10-$15. Mighty119.com — *R.S.*

MONDAY 9

EAST BAY

High Life w/ DJ Matthew Africa The Layover, 10 p.m., free

Reggae Soul featuring DJs [illegible], Hector, The New Parish, 10 p.m., $5

Whatta Kong Out? w/ DJ [illegible] spinning rock and roll, soft hits, [illegible], & soul, The Missouri Lounge, 10 p.m., free

TUESDAY 10

EAST BAY

DJ Jams Dana-Money spinning Latin, punk, & more, The Missouri Lounge, 10 p.m., free

DJ Wooly spinning punk, Lost Weekend Lounge, 9 p.m.-2 a.m., free

Joe Golai Tango Vinyl [illegible], 9 p.m., free

WEDNESDAY 11

EAST BAY

Honey Dew w/ [illegible], The Missouri Lounge, 10 p.m.-2 a.m., free

The Jet Set w/ DJ Seesaw and special classic, Luka's Taproom & Lounge, 9 p.m., free

The Jump Off: Hump Day Hip-Hop w/ DJs spinning hip-hop, Club 21, 9 p.m., $0-$15

Mission Invitational w/ DJ Fee Dog, The Layover, 8 p.m., free

Metal Fight featuring Last Angry Man's spinning thrash vinyl, and more, Merchant's Saloon, 10 p.m., free

Classic Off open-mic poetry followed by DJ music, Alki Lounge, 9:30 p.m.

Paranoias Latin cowboy night w/ [illegible], Violeta Ranch and Bar, 7 p.m., $6-$10

classic Funk, Jazz, new wave, & classic and w/ DJ [illegible], Ruby Room, 10 p.m.-2 a.m., free

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FRI 1/13 Mighty Irish Rock and Indie Celtic Rave Ups TEMPEST SHAMELESS SEAMUS & THE AIMLESS AMOS
SAT 1/14 Spell Binding Irish Americana & Boundary-Pushing Folk Cabaret ASHLING (feat. Melanie O'Reilly) MANA MADDY & THE FAMILY
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LEGAL NOTICES

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 456090
[illegible] **Get Home To Business Consulting** [illegible] Albany, CA [illegible] Alameda County on 11/04/2011.
Get Home To Business Consulting
12/14, 12/21, 12/27, 1/4/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NUMBER: [illegible]
Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
1225 Fallon Street
Oakland, CA 94612
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner FRANCESCO JOHN [illegible] FERREIRA [illegible] filed a petition with this court for a decree changing name [illegible] THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.
NOTICE OF HEARING
May 4, 2012 at 9:30 A.M. in Dept. [illegible], 2nd Floor, Oakland, CA 94612
A copy of this Order To Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: East Bay Express, Alameda County. Dated: December [illegible], 2011.
Signed: [illegible]
Judge of the Superior Court
12/14, 12/21, 12/28, 1/4/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # 457290-91
[illegible] **Templeresse Design; Templeresse Lampworks** [illegible] Berkeley, CA [illegible] Alameda County on 11/23/2011.
Templeresse Design; Templeresse Lampworks
12/14, 12/21, 12/28, 1/4/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 458140
[illegible] **Local Business Consulting** [illegible] Alameda, CA [illegible] Alameda County on 11/[illegible]/2011.
Local Business Consulting
12/28, 12/21, 12/28, 1/4/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # 458442
[illegible] **Clarybelle** [illegible] San Jose Ave., Alameda, CA 94501 [illegible]
Clarybelle
12/28, 1/4, 1/11, 1/18/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # [illegible]
[illegible] **Breath Gallobe** [illegible] Berkeley, CA [illegible] Alameda County on 11/21/2011.
Breath Gallobe
12/28, 12/28, 1/4/ 1/11/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # [illegible]
[illegible] **Monkey Haus Productions** [illegible] Oakland, CA 94611 [illegible] Alameda County on 11/29/2011.
Monkey Haus Productions
12/28, 12/21, 12/28, 1/4/2012

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
CASE NUMBER: [illegible]
Superior Court of California, County of Alameda
1225 Fallon Street
Oakland, CA 94612
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner JASON [illegible] filed a petition with this court for a decree changing name [illegible] THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.
NOTICE OF HEARING
April 6, 2012 at 9:30 A.M. in Dept. [illegible], 2nd Floor, Oakland, CA 94612
A copy of this Order To Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: East Bay Express, Alameda County. [illegible] 20, 2011.
Signed: [illegible]
Judge of the Superior Court
12/28, 1/4, 1/11, 1/18/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # 459036
[illegible] **Vignette Sado, LLC** [illegible] Berkeley, CA 94705 [illegible]
Vignette Sado, LLC
12/28, 1/4, 1/11, 1/18/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # 458015
[illegible] **BUSINESS-SAVVY BOOKKEEPING** [illegible] Alameda County on 11/[illegible]/2011.
BUSINESS-SAVVY BOOKKEEPING
12/21, 12/28, 1/4/ 1/11/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # 458158
[illegible] **Lotus Real Estate Group** [illegible] Oakland, CA [illegible] Alameda County on 12/[illegible]/2011.
Lotus Real Estate Group
12/14, 12/21, 12/28, 1/4/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # 458617
[illegible] **Fair Name ESP** [illegible] Fremont, CA [illegible] Alameda County on 11/[illegible]/2011.
Fair Name ESP
12/21, 12/28, 1/4, 1/11/2012

Fictitious Business Name Statement
File # 458065
[illegible] **GBR Consulting** [illegible] Emeryville, CA 94608 [illegible] Alameda County on [illegible]/2011.
GBR Consulting
12/21, 12/28, 1/4, 1/11/2012

Registered Business Name Statement
File # 459066
[illegible] **City Life** [illegible] Emeryville, CA 94608 [illegible] Alameda County on 11/18/2011.
City Life
12/14, 12/21, 12/28, 1/4/2012

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE Trustee Sale No. 11-[illegible] Title Order No. [illegible] APN [illegible] YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED [illegible]. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. On [illegible] at 12:30 pm, Aztec Foreclosure Corporation as the duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to the power of sale contained in that certain Deed of Trust Recorded on [illegible] as Instrument No. [illegible] of official records in the Office of the Recorder of ALAMEDA County, California, executed by [illegible], Husband and Wife as Joint Tenants, as Trustor, in favor of Deutsche Bank National Trust Company, as Trustee of the IndyMac INDX Mortgage Trust 2007-FLX3 Mortgage Pass-Through Certificates, Series 2007-FLX3 under the Pooling and Servicing Agreement dated April 1, 2007 as Beneficiary, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH [illegible] at the Fallon Street entrance to the County Courthouse, 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA [illegible] described as: [illegible] STREET EMERYVILLE, CA 94608 [illegible] $540,331.13 (Estimated) [illegible] DATE: [illegible] Frame Mifsud, Assistant Secretary & Assistant Vice President Aztec Foreclosure Corporation [illegible] 4665 MacArthur Court, Suite 280 Newport Beach, CA 92660 Phone: (866) 208-0285 or (602) 222-5711 Fax: [illegible] www.aztectrustee.com For Trustee's Sale Information Call 714-730-2727 http://www.lpsasap.com ASAP# 4157619 12/[illegible]/2011, 12/28/2011, 01/04/2012

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE TS No. 11-[illegible] Title Order No. 11-[illegible] Investor/Insurer No. [illegible] APN No. [illegible] YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED [illegible]/2005. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER." Notice is hereby given that RECONTRUST COMPANY, N.A., as duly appointed trustee pursuant to the Deed of Trust executed by COSTOLINO HOGAN III, A SINGLE MAN, dated [illegible]/2005 and recorded 3/18/2005, as Instrument No. [illegible], in Book, Page of Official Records in the office of the County Recorder of Alameda County, State of California, will sell on [illegible]/2012 at 12:30PM, At the Fallon Street entrance to the County Courthouse, 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94612 at public auction, to the highest bidder for cash or check as described below, payable in full at time of sale, all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust, in the property situated in said County and State and as more fully described in the above referenced Deed of Trust. The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 1121 40TH STREET UNIT [illegible], EMERYVILLE, CA, 94608. The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. The total amount of the unpaid balance with interest thereon of the obligation secured by the property to be sold plus reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is $[illegible]. It is possible that at the time of sale the opening bid may be less than the total indebtedness due. In addition to cash, the Trustee will accept cashier's checks drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state. Said sale will be made, in an "AS IS" condition, but without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession or encumbrances, to satisfy the indebtedness secured by said Deed of Trust, advances thereunder, with interest as provided, and the unpaid principal of the Note secured by said Deed of Trust with interest thereon as provided in said Note, plus fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. DATED: 12/24/2011 RECONTRUST COMPANY, N.A. 1800 Tapo Canyon Rd., CA6-914-01-94 SIMI VALLEY, CA 93063 Phone: (800) 281-8219, Sale Information (626) 927-4399 By: [illegible] Trustee's Sale Officer RECONTRUST COMPANY, N.A. is a debt collector attempting to collect a debt. Any information obtained will be used for that purpose. ASAP# [illegible] 12/28/2011, 01/04/2012, 01/11/2012

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NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE Trustee Sale No. 20110015004823 Title Order No. 110432861 FHA/VA/PMI No.: YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 05/14/2007. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. NDEX WEST, LLC, as duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust Recorded on 06/19/2007 as Instrument No. 2007228984 of official records in the office of the County Recorder of ALAMEDA County, State of CALIFORNIA. EXECUTED BY: ZINA R LONG, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK/CASH EQUIVALENT or other form of payment authorized by 2924h(b), (payable at time of sale in lawful money of the United States). DATE OF SALE: 01/10/2012 TIME OF SALE: 12:30 PM PLACE OF SALE: AT THE FALLON STREET ENTRANCE TO THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 1225 FALLON STREET, OAKLAND, CA. STREET ADDRESS and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 1211 55TH ST, EMERYVILLE, CALIFORNIA 94608 APN#: 049-1196-021 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest thereon, as provided in said note(s), advances, under the terms of said Deed of Trust, fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligation secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is $427,760.15. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located. FOR TRUSTEE SALE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL: AGENCY SALES & POSTING 3210 EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 200 IRVINE, CA 92602 714-730-2727 www.lpsasap.com NDEx West, L.L.C. MAY BE ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. NDEx West, L.L.C. as Trustee Dated: 12/14/2011 ASAP# 4150577 12/21/2011, 12/28/2011, 01/04/2012

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NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE Trustee Sale No. 435461CA Loan No. 3014151990 Title Order No. 602120602 YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 07-09-2007. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. On 01-11-2012 at 12:30 PM, CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY as the duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust Recorded 07-23-2007, Book , Page , Instrument 2007277714, of official records in the Office of the Recorder of ALAMEDA County, California, executed by: JOWEESOON KIM, A SINGLE WOMAN, as Trustor, WASHINGTON MUTUAL BANK, FA, as Beneficiary, will sell at public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash, cashier's check drawn by a state or national bank, a cashier's check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a cashier's check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state. Sale will be held by the duly appointed trustee as shown below, of all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by the trustee in the hereinafter described property under and pursuant to the Deed of Trust. The sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by the Deed of Trust, interest thereon, estimated fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee for the total amount (at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale) reasonably estimated to be set forth below. The amount may be greater on the day of sale. Place of Sale: THE FALLON STREET ENTRANCE TO THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 1225 FALLON STREET , OAKLAND, CA Legal Description: A CONDOMINIUM PLAN COMPRISED OF: PARCEL ONE: AN UNDIVIDED 0.4079% INTEREST IN LOT F, AS SAID LOT IS SHOWN ON THE MAP OF TRACT 4142, FILED APRIL 19, 1979, MAP BOOK 110, PAGES 27 AND 28, ALAMEDA COUNTY RECORDS. EXCEPTING THEREFROM: A. ALL THE UNITS, AS SAID UNITS ARE DEFINED IN THE DECLARATION OF CONDOMINIUM DATED SEPTEMBER 24, 1979, RECORDED OCTOBER 11, 1979, SERIES NO. 79-204111, ALAMEDA COUNTY RECORDS, AND SHOWN ON THE PLAN ATTACHED THERETO AS EXHIBIT "A". B. THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO POSSESSION AND OCCUPANCY OF THOSE PORTIONS OF SAID LOT DEFINED AS BALCONIES OR PATIOS AND DESIGNATED WITH A "P" ON THE PLAN ABOVE REFERRED TO. PARCEL TWO: UNIT 426, AS SHOWN ON THE PLAN ABOVE REFERRED TO. PARCEL THREE: THE EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO POSSESSION AND OCCUPANCY OF THOSE AREAS DEFINED AS BALCONIES OR PATIOS AND DESIGNATED "P" ON THE PLAN ABOVE REFERRED TO, ADJACENT TO PARCEL 2 ABOVE, FOR THE BENEFIT OF AND APPURTENANT TO PARCELS 1 AND 2 ABOVE. PARCEL FOUR: A NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN INGRESS AND EGRESS, APPURTENANT TO AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF PREMISES, AS SET FORTH IN SERIES NO. 78-96763, RECORDED MAY 24, 1978, ALAMEDA COUNTY RECORDS. PARCEL FIVE: A NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN INGRESS AND EGRESS, APPURTENANT TO AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF PREMISES, AS SET FORTH IN SERIES NO. 78-96764, RECORDED MAY 24, 1978, ALAMEDA COUNTY RECORDS. PARCEL SIX: A NON-EXCLUSIVE EASEMENT FOR STORM DRAIN FACILITIES, APPURTENANT TO AND FOR THE BENEFIT OF PREMISES, AS SET FORTH IN SERIES NO. 78-96765, RECORDED MAY 24, 1978, ALAMEDA COUNTY RECORDS. Amount of unpaid balance and other charges: $253,105.24 (estimated) Street address and other common designation of the real property: 4 ANCHOR DRIVE #F426 EMERYVILLE, CA 94608 APN Number: 049-1520-560-00 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. The property heretofore described is being sold "as is". In compliance with California Civil Code 2923.5(c) the mortgagee, trustee, beneficiary, or authorized agent declares: that it has contacted the borrower(s) to assess their financial situation and to explore options to avoid foreclosure; or that it has made efforts to contact the borrower(s) to assess their financial situation and to explore options to avoid foreclosure by one of the following methods: by telephone; by United States mail; either 1st class or certified; by overnight delivery; by personal delivery; by e-mail; by face to face meeting. DATE: 12-15-2011 CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY, as Trustee REGINA CANTRELL, ASSISTANT SECRETARY CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. California Reconveyance Company 9200 Oakdale Avenue Mail Stop: CA2-4379 Chatsworth, CA 91311 800-892-6902 For Sales Information: (714) 730-2727 or www.lpsasap.com (714) 573-1965 or www.priorityposting.com ASAP# 4154141 12/21/2011, 12/28/2011, 01/04/2012

Trustee Sale No. 20119008010026 Title Order No. 110480734 FHA/VA/PMI No.: NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 1/30/2006. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. NDEX WEST, LLC, as duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust Recorded on 2/6/2006 as Instrument No. 2006046495 of official records in the office of the County Recorder of ALAMEDA County, State of CALIFORNIA. EXECUTED BY: JEI G KIM, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK/CASH EQUIVALENT or other form of payment authorized by 2924h(b), (payable at time of sale in lawful money of the United States). DATE OF SALE: 1/17/2012 TIME OF SALE: 10:00 AM PLACE OF SALE: SCOTTISH RITE CENTER, 1547 LAKESIDE DRIVE, OAKLAND, CA 94612. STREET ADDRESS and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 3400 CHRISTIE AVENUE #[illegible], EMERYVILLE, CA 94608 APN#: 049-1535-[illegible] The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest thereon, as provided in said note(s), advances, under the terms of said Deed of Trust, fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligation secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is $[illegible]. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the County where the real property is located. FOR TRUSTEE SALE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL: AUCTION.COM, LLC 2 ONE MAUCHLY IRVINE, CA 92618 800-[illegible] Auction.com, LLC NDEx West, L.L.C. as Trustee Dated: 12/2/2011 NDEx West, LLC may be acting as a debt collector attempting to collect a debt. Any information obtained will be used for that purpose. P[illegible] 12/21, 12/28, 01/04/2012

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE Trustee Sale No. 20110015002100 Title Order No. 110466212 FHA/VA/PMI No.: YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 11/30/2004. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. NDEX WEST, LLC, as duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust Recorded on 12/07/2004 as Instrument No. 2004540089 of official records in the office of the County Recorder of ALAMEDA County, State of CALIFORNIA. EXECUTED BY: BIENVENIDO R. DE LA TORRE, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK/CASH EQUIVALENT or other form of payment authorized by 2924h(b), (payable at time of sale in lawful money of the United States). DATE OF SALE: 01/10/2012 TIME OF SALE: 12:30 PM PLACE OF SALE: AT THE FALLON STREET ENTRANCE TO THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 1225 FALLON STREET, OAKLAND, CA. STREET ADDRESS and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 4515-4517 ADELINE STREET, EMERYVILLE, CALIFORNIA 94608 APN#: 049-1174-002 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest thereon, as provided in said note(s), advances, under the terms of said Deed of Trust, fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligation secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is $329,227.24. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located. FOR TRUSTEE SALE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL: AGENCY SALES & POSTING 3210 EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 200 IRVINE, CA 92602 714-730-2727 www.lpsasap.com NDEx West, L.L.C. MAY BE ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. NDEx West, L.L.C. as Trustee Dated: 12/18/2011 ASAP# 4147655 12/21/2011, 12/28/2011, 01/04/2012

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE Trustee Sale No. 440671CA Loan No. 3011995655 Title Order No. 326068 YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 01-10-2007. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. On 01-18-2012 at 12:30 PM, CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY as the duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust Recorded 01-30-2007, Book , Page , Instrument 2007035167, of official records in the Office of the Recorder of ALAMEDA County, California, executed by: TIMOTHY VINCENT HARTNETT, A MARRIED MAN AS HIS SOLE AND SEPARATE PROPERTY, as Trustor, WASHINGTON MUTUAL BANK, FA, as Beneficiary, will sell at public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash, cashier's check drawn by a state or national bank, a cashier's check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a cashier's check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state. Sale will be held by the duly appointed trustee as shown below, of all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by the trustee in the hereinafter described property under and pursuant to the Deed of Trust. The sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by the Deed of Trust, interest thereon, estimated fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee for the total amount (at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale) reasonably estimated to be set forth below. The amount may be greater on the day of sale. Place of Sale: THE FALLON STREET ENTRANCE TO THE COUNTY COURTHOUSE, 1225 FALLON STREET , OAKLAND, CA Legal Description: PARCEL ONE: AN UNDIVIDED ONE/SIXTY SECOND (1/62) INTEREST AS TENANT IN COMMON IN AND TO LOT 1, PARCEL MAP 7782, FILED AUGUST 9, 2004, IN MAP BOOK 278, PAGES 1 AND 2, ALAMEDA COUNTY RECORDS. EXCEPTING THEREFROM THE FOLLOWING: A) ALL OF THE CONDOMINIUM UNITS AS SHOWN ON THE CONDOMINIUM PLAN ("THE CONDOMINIUM PLAN") ATTACHED AS EXHIBIT "A" TO THE DECLARATION OF COVENANTS, CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS OF GREENCITY LOFTS, A COMMON INTEREST DEVELOPMENT ("THE DECLARATION") RECORDED JULY 27, 2005, SERIES NO. 2005-319659, OFFICIAL RECORDS AND RE-RECORDED SEPTEMBER 9, 2005 SERIES NO. 2005-388489. B) ALL OF THE EXCLUSIVE USE COMMON AREAS AS SHOWN ON THE CONDOMINIUM PLAN REFERRED TO ABOVE. C) EASEMENTS FOR ENCROACHMENT, SUPPORT, OCCUPANCY AND USE AND FOR INGRESS AND EGRESS FROM THE COMMON AREA. PARCEL TWO: UNIT 321 AS SHOWN ON THE CONDOMINIUM PLAN REFERRED TO IN PARCEL ONE ABOVE. PARCEL THREE: THE EXCLUSIVE USE COMMON AREA AS DESIGNATED ON THE PLAN AS BALCONY, PATIO, AND/OR STEPS, LANDING, PORCH WHICH BEARS THE SAME NUMBER AS THE UNIT NUMBER OF THE OWNERS UNIT AS SHOWN ON THE PLAN. PARCEL FOUR: THE EXCLUSIVE USE COMMON AREA DESIGNATED ON THE PLAN AS PARKING SPACE NUMBER 34. PARCEL FIVE: THE RIGHT OF INGRESS AND EGRESS AND USE AND ENJOYMENT OF ALL THE AREAS DESIGNATED AS COMMON AREAS, AS SHOWN ON THE CONDOMINIUM PLAN REFERRED TO ABOVE, AND AS SET FORTH IN THE DECLARATION REFERRED TO ABOVE. Amount of unpaid balance and other charges: $480,715.38 (estimated) Street address and other common designation of the real property: 1007 41ST STREET #321 EMERYVILLE, CA 94608 APN Number: 012-1022-013-00 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. The property heretofore described is being sold "as is". In compliance with California Civil Code 2923.5(c) the mortgagee, trustee, beneficiary, or authorized agent declares: that it has contacted the borrower(s) to assess their financial situation and to explore options to avoid foreclosure; or that it has made efforts to contact the borrower(s) to assess their financial situation and to explore options to avoid foreclosure by one of the following methods: by telephone; by United States mail; either 1st class or certified; by overnight delivery; by personal delivery; by e-mail; by face to face meeting. DATE: 12-28-2011 CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY, as Trustee ISAAC PACHECO, ASSISTANT SECRETARY CALIFORNIA RECONVEYANCE COMPANY IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. California Reconveyance Company 9200 Oakdale Avenue Mail Stop: CA2-4379 Chatsworth, CA 91311 800-892-6902 For Sales Information: (714) 730-2727 or www.lpsasap.com (714) 573-1965 or www.priorityposting.com ASAP# 4156211 12/28/2011, 01/04/2012, 01/11/2012

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RESCUE

Trustee Sale No. 20110069903665 Title Order No. 110452347 FHA/VA/PMI No.: NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 4/18/2003. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. NDEX WEST, LLC, as duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust Recorded on 05/01/2003 as Instrument No. 2003254518 of official records in the office of the County Recorder of Alameda County, State of CALIFORNIA. EXECUTED BY: SILVIA G. HOTARANU AND FILOFTEIA HOTARANU, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK/CASH EQUIVALENT or other form of payment authorized by 2924h(b), (payable at time of sale in lawful money of the United States). DATE OF SALE: 1/25/2012 TIME OF SALE: 09:00 AM PLACE OF SALE: Scottish Rite Center, 1547 Lakeside Drive Oakland, CA 94612. STREET ADDRESS and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 5855 HORTON STREET UNIT [illegible], EMERYVILLE, CA 94608 APN#: 049-1325-[illegible] The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest thereon, as provided in said note(s), advances, under the terms of said Deed of Trust, fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligation secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is $97,364.91. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located. FOR TRUSTEE SALE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL: PRIORITY POSTING & PUBLISHING, INC. 17501 IRVINE BLVD., SUITE ONE TUSTIN, CA 92780 714-573-1965 www.priorityposting.com NDex West, LLC as Trustee Dated: 12/19/2011 NDex West, LLC MAY BE ACTING AS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. P930606 1/4, 1/11, 01/18/2012

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE TS No. 11-0099222 Title Order No. 11-0081152 Investor/Insurer No. 872369536 APN No. 049-1537-003 YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 12/07/2006. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER." Notice is hereby given that RECONTRUST COMPANY, N.A., as duly appointed trustee pursuant to the Deed of Trust executed by JACLYN DE VERA MONCADA, A SINGLE WOMAN, dated 12/07/2006 and recorded 12/15/2006, as Instrument No. 2006457[illegible], in Book , Page , of Official Records in the office of the County Recorder of Alameda County, State of California, will sell on 01/25/2012 at 12:30PM, At the Fallon Street entrance to the County Courthouse, 1225 Fallon Street, Oakland, CA 94612 at public auction, to the highest bidder for cash or check as described below, payable in full at time of sale, all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust, in the property situated in said County and State and as more fully described in the above referenced Deed of Trust. The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 6400 CHRISTIE AVENUE #1305, EMERYVILLE, CA, 94608. The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. The total amount of the unpaid balance with interest thereon of the obligation secured by the property to be sold plus reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is $[illegible]. It is possible that at the time of sale the opening bid may be less than the total indebtedness due. In addition to cash, the Trustee will accept cashier's checks drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state. Said sale will be made, in an "AS IS" condition, but without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession or encumbrances, to satisfy the indebtedness secured by said Deed of Trust, advances thereunder, with interest as provided, and the unpaid principal of the Note secured by said Deed of Trust with interest thereon as provided in said Note, plus fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. DATED: [illegible]/2011 RECONTRUST COMPANY, N.A. 1800 Tapo Canyon Rd., CA6-914-01-94 SIMI VALLEY, CA 93063 Phone: (800) 281-8219, Sale Information (626) 927-4399 By: Trustee's Sale Officer RECONTRUST COMPANY, N.A. is a debt collector attempting to collect a debt. Any information obtained will be used for that purpose. ASAP# 4155377 12/28/2011, 01/04/2012, 01/11/2012

DANA McRAE, COUNTY COUNSEL #142231
SHANNON SULLIVAN, Assistant County
Counsel #182637
701 Ocean Street, Room 505
Santa Cruz, California 95060
Telephone No. (831) 454-2040
Fax No.: (831) 454-2115
Attorney For: HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT
CASE NAME: CHANCE F
CASE NO. DP002504
CITATION FOR PUBLICATION UNDER WELFARE AND INSTITUTIONS CODE SECTION 294
To: AUSTIN DALE WHITE and anyone claiming to be a parent of CHANCE F born on SEPTEMBER 5, 2011 at Dominican Hospital, Soquel, California to Mother Christina Lee Foster
A hearing will be held on February 7, 2012 at 8:15 a.m. in Dept. A
located at:
SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ
1 SECOND STREET
WATSONVILLE, CA 95076
At the hearing the court will consider the recommendations of the social worker or probation officer.
The social worker or probation officer will recommend that your child be freed from your legal custody so that the child may be adopted. If the court follows the recommendation, all your parental rights to the child will be terminated. You have the right to be present at the hearing, to present evidence, and you have the right to be represented by an attorney. If you do not have an attorney and cannot afford to hire one, the court will appoint an attorney for you. If the court terminates your parental rights, the order may be final. The court will proceed with this hearing whether or not you are present. Date: DECEMBER [illegible], 2011 Alex Calvo, Clerk, By YORLENNE ROGERS, Deputy
Request for Accommodations
Assistive listening systems, computer assisted real time captioning, or sign language interpreter services are available if you ask at least five days before the proceeding. Contact the clerk's office or go to www.courtinfo.ca.gov/forms for Request for Accommodations by Persons With Disabilities and Response (Form MC-410). [Civil Code Sec. 54.8.]
12/14, 12/21, 12/28, 1/4

SAVAGE LOVE

MONOGAMISH MISSIVES

Secretly (and happily) nonmonogamous couples speak out.

By Dan Savage

Why do most people assume that all nonmonogamous relationships are destined to fail? Because we only hear about the ones that do. If a three-way or an affair was a factor in a divorce or breakup, we hear all about it. But we rarely hear from happy couples who aren't monogamous, because they don't want to be perceived as dangerous sex maniacs who are destined to divorce.

This state of affairs — couples who experimented with nonmonogamy and wound up divorced won't shut up, couples who experimented with nonmonogamy and are still together won't speak up — allows smug and insecure monogamists to run around insisting that there's no such thing as happy, stable monogamish couples.

"You know lots of couples who have had three-ways and flings who aren't divorced," I told the skeptics a few weeks ago, "you just don't know you know them." In an effort to introduce the skeptics to some happily monogamish couples, I invited coupled people who'd had successful flings, affairs, three-ways, and swinging experiences to write in and share their stories. The response was overwhelming — I may do a book — and I'm turning over the rest of this week's column to their stories.

My husband and I have issues like any couple, but I still smile when I see him walk into a room and he still takes my hand when we're walking down the street. For the past seven years, we have been "monogamish." It started off with a discussion of "if you ever cheat on me and it's a one-time thing, I wouldn't want to know." Then, when he turned forty, we had a threesome with a female friend. When I actually saw him "in the moment," I didn't have the jealous feelings I had always feared. There is no question that our relationship is our first priority, but just the possibility of a little strange now and then makes him feel like a stud. (And I reap the benefits!) I don't much care for sex without emotion and affection, so my flings have been rather limited. We haven't told our families or more than a couple of friends. I don't want to deal with the judgment of others.

For the first five years of my marriage, everything was great: lots of sex, both GGG, lots of love. Then my wife's libido failed. Whatever the problem was, she couldn't articulate it. After a year where we'd had sex twice, I reached out to someone else. I used Craigslist and I was honest. I explained that I had no intention of leaving my wife and that I was looking for someone in a situation similar to mine. It took months to find the right person. We struck up a years-long affair. At the same time, I had a wonderful yet sexless marriage. Then, after nearly four years, a strange thing happened: My wife's libido came back strong. To this day, she cannot explain why it left or why it came back. With the reason for my affair gone, I ended things with my fuck buddy. And know what? Years of honest talk made this easy. She understood; we went our separate ways.

So I had a four-year affair without getting caught. Here's how I pulled it off: I never told anyone about it ever. I chose a partner who wanted exactly what I wanted: we didn't film ourselves (as hot as that sounded), we used condoms, I kept my computer clear of any evidence, and we never called or texted each other.

I agree with you that we rarely hear about successful marriages that are open. How do I know? I just discovered that my parents are swingers — and they have been married for 26 years!

My husband, almost exactly ten years older than me, confessed a cuckold fetish to me shortly before our fifth anniversary. I said no, but a seed was planted. Whenever I would develop a crush on another man, it would occur to me that I could sleep with him if I wanted to. Five years later, my boyfriend of two years, who happens to be exactly ten years younger than me, was one of the guests at our ten-year anniversary party. My boyfriend is a good-looking grad student who adores me and values my husband's advice about his education and career plans. He treats my husband with the perfect blend of affection and contempt ("Gratitude and attitude," my boyfriend calls it.) I enjoy my boyfriend, but I love my husband more than ever. My husband is not allowed to have sex with other women (he doesn't want to, anyway) and he's not allowed to have sex with me without my boyfriend's permission (which he usually — though not always — gets). Our families would be appalled. We simply don't live in a part of the country or move in social circles where we could be honest about any of this with anyone.

From the outside, my husband and I look like a boring vanilla married couple. In fact, people have included us in judgmental conversations about open relationships. But the truth is, for nearly as long as we've been together (three-plus years), we've had a semi-open relationship. My husband is bi. When he told me after a few months of dating, years of Savage Love reading helped me to keep an open mind. Long story short: We worked out rules that were mutually agreeable. Now he can hook up safely with guys and come home to a loving wife with whom he can be completely honest.

I'm a happily married woman — and so is my girlfriend. Maybe it's cowardly of us, but no matter how simple our relationship seems to us, the people we care about would not understand. Yes, we do this with our husbands' blessing. (We even double-date from time to time!) No, there's nothing lacking in our marriages. Our parents, relatives, children, friends, and coworkers know we're close. But I don't see the need to tell anyone the entire truth. I was on the fence about sending this email — that's how little fuss we make about it. Then I thought, if I do send it, and if enough people send their stories, maybe one day we can go public and it won't be a big fucking deal. That'd be awesome. ●

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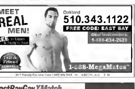
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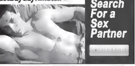
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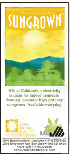
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